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A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE
GEORGIAN CHURCH.

A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE
GEORGIAN CHURCH.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF P. IOSELIAN, AND
EDITED WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES,

BY

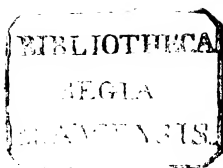
THE REV. S. C. MALAN,
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INSCRIBED BY THE EDITOR
TO
THE REV. GEORGE WILLIAMS,
FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,
IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF
HIS KINDNESS IN MATTERS RELATING TO GEORGIAN LITERATURE,
AND OF THE ACTIVE INTEREST HE TAKES
IN FORWARDING UNION WITH THE EASTERN CHURCH.

PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

THE desire on the part of the Anglican Church for closer intercourse with the Churches of the East induces me to give from the Russian the following short but interesting account of the Church of Georgia, as yet little heard of, though venerable alike for its antiquity and for its faithfulness during centuries of untold vicissitudes. The author, a learned Georgian, writing for the first time a history of the Church of his country, claims in his Preface the indulgence of his readers for a work which is little more than an outline of the

main features of the history he tells. The same indulgence will, I trust, be shown also to my work, which is only an attempt at supplying for the present the lack of information on this branch of the Eastern Church, until some better book on the subject appear. I have already received from the author himself fresh materials, which I hope to make known at some future time, when, D.V., I publish not merely the bald translation of an elementary work, but the more complete history of a branch of the Eastern Church that deserves to be better known.

S. C. MALAN.

Broadwindsor, November 11th, 1865.

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PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR.

“The Georgian Church, founded in the fourth century, has continued hitherto distinct, and independent of other churches. From her position she remained a stranger to the discord and dissension between the Greek and the Roman Churches, and is now, as ever, at one with the Greek Church. How is it possible to explain her origin, except by the fact that, both being of the primitive Church, they two had the same beginning?”—PHILARÈTE, *Metropolitan of Moscow*.



HITHERTO Georgia has never had a history of her own Church. Her historians often mention ecclesiastical matters and events connected with the Church, when these have any relation to the civil state of the people ; but then, not only too briefly,

imperfectly, without criticism, but also very often without any regard to dates. Hence the frequent anachronisms, the improbable statements, and also, therefore, the difficulties which at every step hinder the progress of the historian. Having surmounted by main force all these obstacles, I was obliged to have recourse to foreign assistance, and to look into Byzantine historians and elsewhere for what our own native sources do not yield. Setting forth for the first time a short history only, the writer flatters himself with the hope that his first efforts will not draw upon themselves unmerited censure from those who will bear in mind that he had at one and the same time to search out, unravel, and set in a systematic order facts scattered in many and various works. On this account, therefore, he craves the indulgence of his readers, and ventures to hope they will kindly overlook all mistakes and defects, and thus encourage him to a more complete history

at some future time of this Church which contributes to the brightest proofs to the primitive orthodoxy and adherence to the Confession of Faith of the Græco-Russian Eastern Church, and that bears evident testimony to the departure of the Western Church from the true precepts and rules of the Apostolic and Synodal Church, as already remarked by the author of *Conversation between an Inquirer and a Faithful Believer*, p. 130, and by that of the *History of the Russian Church*, p. vii. Besides all this, my object in writing this book has also been to inspire the sons of the Georgian Church with veneration for our orthodox Faith, and with sincere devotedness to the Government. For a long time did the kings of Georgia on the throne, groaning under the Mahomedan yoke, and long for such a rule as that which we now enjoy ; after such a rule did our ancestors ever thirst, when Russia, chosen by Providence as a check upon Islamism, had not

yet been raised from the dead by the mighty hand of the Most High; for this rule did the kings Theimuraz I., Wakhtang VI., Heraclius I., and Theimuraz II. travel to Moscow; to this rule did King Heraclius II. turn himself, and thither did George XIII. flee for shelter. In the soul of this king rested the love of God, without which, the holy Apostle tells us, even the power of moving mountains is nothing. Without this love, the genius of our glorious sovereigns would have died out, and the glory of Iberia would have been darkened for ever; without this holy love, the bloody revels of the ruthless enemies of Christianity would never have ceased in a Christian country. King George XIII., while struggling with death, found yet enough of strength and of love in his broken heart to support, by every possible means, the desperate state of Christianity in his day. Then the Emperors of Russia welcomed with open arms

to their bosom the wailing but orthodox sons of like Faith with themselves, and the Christians of Iberia rested at last from a long state of exhaustion.

CANDIDATE PLATO IOSELIAN.

Tiflis, 18th of November, 1835.

**** The Author's notes are numbered ; the translator's are distinguished by a letter.**

HISTORY

OF THE

GEORGIAN CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

Iberia falls to the lot of the B. V. Mary—Preaching of the H. A. Andrew — Bringing of our Saviour's Coat to Mtskhetha—Influence of the Miracles and of the Death of H. F. Clemens on the Iberians—Preaching of S. Nina—Authentic Proofs of the Conversion of the Iberians to the Christian Faith.



THE first planting of the Christian faith in Georgia dates from the Apostolic times. The Georgian annals favour the tradition¹ that, when the division of countries

¹ The monk Stephen Swiatogorski writes thus :—"After our Saviour's ascension into heaven, the disciples, being

among the Apostles for preaching the Gospel took place, Iberia^a fell to the lot of the B. V. Mary.

assembled together on Mount Zion, with Mary the mother of our Lord, waited for the Comforter, according to the Saviour's command, not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, and in order to see what country should be allotted to every one, wherein to preach the Gospel. The B. V. Mary then said, 'I will also cast my lot among you, so that I may not be left without a share in the distribution, but so that I may have for my lot the country it will please God to give me.' The Apostles listened with deference to her wishes, and the province of Iberia was given her. She received it with gladness; and, as she was preparing to go into Iberia, soon after the day whereon the tongues of fire had rested on the head of every one of the Apostles assembled with her, an Angel of God said unto her, 'Depart not from Jerusalem, but abide there yet awhile; for, the lot having fallen to thee to enlighten that country in the end, thine influence shall continue there; but thou shalt have to suffer a little in the land in which God appoints thee to dwell.' Then she tarried a little longer at Jerusalem."—*Lives of Saints for the 15th of August.*

^a Iberia, or "Eastern Iberia," ἑσθρινὸν ἔθνος Ἰβήρων (Dionys. Peripl. 695), as distinguished from "Western Iberia," ἑσπερίου Ἰβήρης (Ælian, lib. xiii. 15), on the inner coast of Spain, from the Pyrenees to the pillars of Hercules (Polyb. iii. 17; Marciani Heracleensis Peripl. Maris Exteri, lib. ii. 4, 6, 7, 8; Appian, Mithrid. cap. xxi). Hence, Ἰβήρης, Iberes, Iberi, and Hiberi, Ἰβήρης (Prisc. Perieg. 576), *i. q.*, "Hispani, ab Ibero

amne—quem propter universam Hispaniam Græci appellavere Iberiam” (Plin. N. H. lib. iii. 4). These being οἱ πρὸς ἐσπέραν γνωσθέντες—*Ἰβηρες* (Strabo, Proleg. lib. i. c. 27), Bochart (Paleg. col. 625, *seq.*) attempted to derive Iberia from the Syriac *‘Ibriā*, written with the *‘ain* (*ee*), a term used in the Old Testament to render τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς; but, unfortunately for him, Iberia is always written without the *‘ain* (*ee*) by Syriac authors, such as Barhebræus (Chron. p. 374) and Assemani (Bibl. Or. vol. i. p. 269), &c.

Among the ancients, some, like Dionysius (Peripl. 695), thought the Eastern Iberians, οἳ ποτε Πυρήνηθεν ἐπ’ ἀνατολῶν ἀφίκοντο, a colony from Spain, (so also Eustath. Com. in Peripl. 281 and 695; Strabo, Proleg. lib. iii. c. 21; Nicephorus, in Geogr. Synops. ed. Müller, p. 463). This colony, says Moses of Chorene (lib. ii. c. 7), repeating what Abydenus states, was brought from Spain by Nebuchadnezzar, after his conquest of Lybia and of Spain (Iberia), (see Euseb. Chron. Armen., where Megasthenes is quoted on the subject; and Megasthen. Fragm. in Scriptor. Hist. Græci Min., vol. ii. 416, 417). Appian, however (Mithrid. cap. ci.), tells us that, *Ἰβήρας δὲ τοὺς ἐν Ἀσίᾳ οἱ μὲν προγόνους, οἱ δ’ ἀποίκους, ἡγοῦνται τῶν Εὐρωπαϊῶν Ἰβήρων, οἱ δὲ μόνον δμωνύμους*, “the Eastern Iberians were by some thought to be a colony from Spain (Iberia), by others the mother-country that colonized Spain; while others only thought these two nations related by having accidentally the same name.” But this identity of name can hardly be accidental. A. Chaho (Histoire prim. des Euskariens Basques, Intr. p. xxiii. lxxvii. *seq.*) derives Iber (Ebro) from *Ib-er*, “boiling or foaming river” (an etymology which W. von Humboldt disputes in Prüfung des Unters. über die Urbewohner Hispaniens, p. 54, *seq.*), and makes the Eastern Iberians a colony from Spain; and at p. 161 he compares the

river *Aragus* of Iberia (Araxes) with the *Aragus* of Navarre, the *Gorde* or *Gordei* of Alava, with a mountain of the same name in Armenia, &c. But Francisque-Michel (*Le Pays Basque*, p. 13) refutes him by quoting F. Gabriel de Henao and other writers to prove the contrary. The subject evidently requires greater researches than have yet been made.

On the other hand, the Georgian Wakhusht, in his geography of Georgia (*Gheograph. Aghtsera Sakartl.* p. 52), while mentioning the three names of Georgia—Sakarthvelo, Iveria, and Georgia—attempts to derive “Iveria,” or Iberia, from the Georgian words *ii-veria*, that mean “I have won” or “conquered,” said to have been used by King Aderki as an exclamation when he fought and overcame Arshaki, king of Karthli, at the time our Saviour was born; and as a prophecy of the triumph of the Cross over idols and heathenism. But, first, there is nothing said about this in the history of King Aderki, given in the standard history of Georgia (*Karthlis tskhovreba*, vol. i. p. 39, *seq.*), and, secondly, the name “Iberia” for Eastern Iberia was known of the Romans and of the Greeks long before the days of Aderki; so that this etymology of “Iberia” is worth very little. Moreover, native writers never use the term “Iveria” or “Iberia,” which was, probably, borrowed from the Greeks, or, may be, originally from the Armenians; but they always adopt the native names “Karthli” and “Sakarthvelo” for Georgia. It was called Karthli by Karthlos, second son of Thargamos (*Thorgarma*, *Karthl. Tskovr.* p. 10, *seq.*), who gave that name to the place, *sada daeshena*, which he built for his residence, and who also called Sakarthvelo, *mis gamo mortchiltha anu tsil-khdomiltha*, to the lands he had subdued or to those around him. (*Wakhusht. Gheoghr.* p. 52.)

But, in the absence of proofs, we may perhaps find in the

following a clue to the origin of the name Iberia or Iveria. Among the traditions of East and of West Irān, we find that they tell in common of a Mount Caucasus on the Bactrian frontiers of India, and of another stretching across the isthmus that separates the Black Sea from the Caspian. The highest range of the Bactrian Caucasus that formed the highlands of East Irān was called *Alborz* (Borhān-i-qāte, *q. v.*), and is often mentioned in the Avesta as *hara* or *haraiti bareh*, in Pehlevi *Ar-būrdj*, "the high mountain," or "high chain of mountains" (Yaçna, i. 15, at Burnouf, p. 231, *seq.*; and Justi Lex, *q. v.*; Spiegel, Av. ii. p. 37, and Erān, p. 280, *seq.*); so also is the highest summit of Mount Caucasus, north of Imereth, called *Elburz*. Likewise is Irān, or Ariyāna vaēja, placed between the sources of the Oxus and of the Jaxartes (on the Bactrian side of the Indian Caucasus (Lassen, Ind. Alterth. vol. i. p. 526, *seq.*; Spiegel. Av. vol. i. p. 61, tr.; St. Martin, Geogr. du N. O. de l'Inde, p. 83, *seq.*, &c.), and is by others identified with the Arān of Arabic writers (Lex. Geogr. ad Calc. V. Salad. ed. Schultens, *q. v.*), connected with at least a portion of the Atropatene or Azerbaijan, and said, as by Kleuker (Zend Av. vol. i. p. 299, note *a*, &c.), to have been the country that lies between the sources of the Araxes and of the Kur—that is, the greater portion of Iberia or Georgia. Thus we find that, without venturing on the reckless criticism of Ewald and of Spiegel (Erān, p. 274), who make one word of Arān or Irān, and of Kharrān, Haran, the dwelling-place of Abraham—we cannot but agree with Kleuker and with Spiegel in tracing these traditions from the land of Armenia or West Irān, eastward to the highlands of Bactria.

We find, moreover, first, that the land of Iberia was, according to Armenian writers, "higher," that is, more towards the Alborj or Elburz of Mount Caucasus, than the settlements

of Shem, in Armenia ; and, secondly, that the Iberians are always called by Armenian authors *Virk* or *Ivirk*, or even, as by Moses of Chorene, *Iveriatsik*. This *Virk* (*Vrā*, *Vrats*) seems very nearly related to *ver*, "above," as *Ivirk* is to *i'ver*, or *i'verā*, *ἐνάνω*; whence "Iberia" would come to mean "the upper country," as regards Armenia, and "Iberians" the *οἱ τῆς ἐνάνω χώρας*. This agrees also with what we read in Wakhusht (Gheoghr. p. 74, *seq.*), that Mtkhethos divided his kingdom into *Shida-Karthli* or Middle Karthli, and *Zemo-karthli* or Upper Karthli, which extended westward of the Likh mountains to the Black Sea, and was thus the part of Iberia adjoining to Armenia. This seems to show that the name of Iberia must have been given by Armenians, and is not of native origin. Whatever amount of probability there be in this etymology, it is, at all events, better than that proposed by Mr. Brosset—viz., to change "Iveriatsi," the term used by Moses of Chorene (lib. ii. c. 7, p. 93, ed. Whist.) and by Eusebius (Chron. Arm. vol. i. p. 59), into "Veriatsi," which he renders "Jews," so as to make the Iberians a colony of Jews, taken thither by Nebuchadnezzar. But (1) Jews are called "Hreik" in Armenian and not "Veriatsi," and (2) both Abydenus, Megasthenes, and their followers make Nebuchadnezzar conquer Libya, and thence pass over to Spain, whence he is said by them to have brought a colony beyond Colchis, which, by Strabo, was thought to be the Iberians (Proleg. lib. i. c. iii. 21).

As regards the third foreign name, Georgia, Wakhusht says it was given *mkhned momdjirneobisa mushagobisa Karthoelthatha*, because of the indefatigable activity and labour of the inhabitants of Karthli, *georgi* (*γεωργός*) meaning "a labourer" (Gheoghr. Aghtser. p. 52). But the other reason he gives—namely, that S. George, being related to S. Nina,

This tradition, now generally received among the nation, and long since commemorated by the Church,² rests on the testimony of native and of Greek writers of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, who ascribe to the H. Apostle Andrew³

the illuminatress of Georgia, was on that account honoured all over the country—is far more probable. Georgia is called Kurdj by the Arabs, Gurdzistan by the Turks, and Gruzinia by the Russians. In this history the names Iberia and Georgia are used indiscriminately.

² Queen Tamar (xiith century) reminds of the protection of the B. V. Mary the soldiers whom she encouraged to fight in the name of the faith and of the holy Church. A Russian historian relates that she said, in presence of an image of the Virgin, "Sovereign Lady, mother of our Lord of thy mercy thou hast set me queen over thy portion, thine own land. Before me thou didst adopt my father, and now thou hast put into my hands the sceptre of thine inheritance, weak child as I am!"—Hist. of Russia, from the beginning to the battle of Poltawa, vol. ii. p. 206.

³ Both the writers of the primitive Church and those of the life of S. Nina and of Tcheta Minea (on the 30th November) agree in saying that the Apostle Andrew was in Iberia, and that he preached among the Alanes, the Ap'hkhazes, the Abasges, and other nations. The testimony of Nicephorus (Hist. lib. ii. c. 39; lib. viii. c. 6), although the last to mention the preaching of Andrew among tribes that fed on human flesh, yet explains the records of other historians and the tradition of the people. Under these "Anthropophagi"

the effectual preaching of the Gospel in those parts. According to one historian, S. Andrew passed

we reckon not only Scythians and Massagetæ, but also the neighbouring Ap'hkhazes, Alani, and Albani (Daghestan), a portion of the actual Kakhethia—names by which Greek writers often designated Eastern Iberians, that is, men who lived by the river Alazan, Swani, Djekittsii, and other mountain tribes. The same is also told by Nicetas Paphlagon (Maxim. Biblioth. Patr. Veter. tom. xxvii. orat. ii. fol. 388).

[Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 1) says that Scythia fell to the lot of S. Andrew—ὡς ἡ παράδοσις—'Ἀνδρέας δὲ τὴν Σκυθίαν—πέριεχει.—Transl.]

Other writers speak of the preaching of the Gospel in Iberia by other Apostles. S. Jerome says that S. Matthew preached the Gospel in the second Ethiopia. By Ethiopia, the ancients in general meant Colchis: "in altera Ethiopia ubi est irruptio Apsari et Hyssi portus." These two rivers existed only in Colchis; and this is yet confirmed by Sophronius, who says that the H. Apostle Andrew preached in Sebastopolis the great (Dioscuria), near to which the river Apsarus, as well as the Phasis, flows into the sea. The Ethiopians, he says, peopled that land.—Geogr. Sacra Bocharti, lib. iv. c. xxxiv, col. 286.

According to Sophronius, the Apostle Bartholomew preached the Christian faith in Albania, at present called Daghestan. Apud Hieron. Descript. Eccl., and also Nicet. Orat. in Bartholomæum, p. 397. Tradition numbers him among those who suffered in those parts; others place his tomb in the city of Albanopolis, reckoned to the greater Armenia.—Moses of Chor. Geogr.

through Cappadocia, the sea-coasts, and Trapezus into Lower Iberia, where he first preached the Gospel in the town of Didatchara.^b Thence he went to preach in Clarjeth,⁴ in Atskver,⁵ in Tschum,⁶

^b Did-Atchara, or Adjhara, a town in the district of Adchara, called after mountains and a river of that name between Meskhети and Gouria, in Upper Karthli.

⁴ *Clarjethi* is the name of an ancient territory of Georgia, situated on the borders of Anatolia, to the south-west of Akhaltsik. To this day one finds here and there remains of ancient monuments relative to the preaching of the Gospel in those parts.—Saint Martin, tom. i. 47.

⁵ *Atskver*, one of the most ancient cities of Georgia, on the Kur, was remarkable, in the flourishing days of Christianity, for a large and handsome church to the B. V. Mary, whose wonder-working image is yet known by the name of the B. V. of Atskver. It was the seat of a Metropolitan; but the Turks, having made war against it, turned to Islamism all its inhabitants, as well as those of the surrounding country, and having, during three hundred and nine years, succeeded in destroying every vestige of the Georgian language, they also with it effaced all traces of Christianity. Atskver was in 1828 restored to Georgia, by the treaty of Adrianople, after the peace with Turkey.

⁶ *Tskhumi*, or *Tskhomisi*, near to the shores of the Black Sea, also one of the most ancient towns of Georgia, was destroyed by Murvan the Deaf in his wars with Georgia, in the year 731. It is at present (1843) only a village, in the hands of the Turks.

in Mingrelia,^o in Ap'hkhazia, and in other places; and his teaching was accompanied by miracles and the healing of diseases, which are all told in detail by native historians. We may safely infer that this preaching was not altogether without fruit, from the fact that, although the seed of the Gospel was crushed by King Aderc^d (A.D. 55),

^o Mingrelia, also called *Odishi*, or *Ap'khazethi*, and, by the Greeks, Abasa (Wakhusht, Gheoghr. p. 400), was reckoned to Egros, son of Thogarma, and from him was called Egris. Hence the native adjective *Meegrelni*, or *Megrelni*—i.e., "of Egros," or "of Egris;" but the term *Megrelia* is never used in ancient Georgian authors (Wakh. p. 393, note 1).

^d Aderc, or Aderki, was the tenth king of Georgia, and son of Bartomi. He took possession of the kingdom of Karthli, ruled in Mtskhetha, and is said to have well governed his people. The first year of his reign, *ishwa Up'hali tchwenti Yesō Christe*, our Lord Jesus Christ was born, and news of His birth was brought to Mtskhetha by the wise men from the East, who went to Jerusalem at that time. During the reign of Aderki, the H. Apostle Andrew came first to Trapezus (Trebizond), then to Did-Adchara, in Akhal-Tzikhé, and thence went all over Iberia, where he preached the Gospel and wrought many miracles. At that time, also, came Elioze and Simon the Canaanite, whose tomb is shown in the city of Nicope, or Nicophia. Aderki, angry at the sight of Karthli, and of Mingrelia, turned from their idols through the preaching of S. Andrew, called

who soon raised a persecution against the new converts, yet neither the worship of idols nor that of fire ever after became as prevalent as before. We find, also, that the tomb of Simon the Canaanite,⁷

together all the Eris-thaws, or princes, of those provinces, brought them back by force to idolatry, hid or destroyed the crosses and the images, and was wroth against the Eris-thaw of Clarjeth, who let S. Andrew depart in peace to keep the Passover at Jerusalem. The H. Apostle, however, returned thence into Iberia, where he continued to preach the Gospel and to work miracles with great success.—Karthlis Tskhovreba, pp. 39—45 and 46.

⁷ Besides native historians, other writers of the Apostles' lives allude to this. Cod. Apocryph. Novi Testam. a Joh. Alb. Fabricio Hamburgi, anno 1703, p. 629. Beda Retractat. in Auctor. cap. 1. "Simonem Zelotem et Judam Jacobi referunt historiæ, in quibus Apostolorum passiones continentur, et a plurimis deputantur Apocripha, prædicasse in Perside, ibique a templorum Pontificibus, in civitate Suanira occisos, gloriosum subiisse martyrum. Quibus adstipulatur et liber martyrologi; qui B. Hieronymi nomine ac præfatione attitlatur quamvis idem Hieronymus illius libri non auctor, sed interpres. Eusebius autem auctor extitisse narretur. Confer martyrologium sub Hieronymi nomine a Florentinio editum et illustratum, pag. 166 et 938, ubi pro Suanir lego excusam Suanis," remarks Fabricius. No mention is made anywhere in antiquity of the town Suanira, in Persia. On the other hand, Pliny mentions the Suani as inhabiting ancient Colchis; N. H. lib. vi. c. 9. Likewise Ptolemy, lib. v.

fellow-traveller of S. Andrew, and left by him in those wild regions for the confirmation of the Gospel—a tomb which is shown at the present day on the hills of Ap'hkhazia^o, soon became an object of pious veneration for the lawless tribes of the

c. 9, and Strabo, lib. ii. allude to the Suani as living in the country called Suanet, to the north of Iberia ; with which also agrees Menander Protector, a Byzantine historian, p. 116, 120, 123, 126, &c., who describes the situation of that people in the very words of the Persian king Chosroes, in his fruitless contests with the Greek emperors. That people lived, says that writer, on the mountains of the Caucasus ; and their manners and customs are thus described by him : *incolæ κλώτες τε καὶ λαφυράγωγοι καὶ χαλεπῶν ἔργων καὶ ἀνοσίων ἐργαταί.*

This is further confirmed by Isidorus, *De Morte et Vita Sanctor.* cap. 81, who writes that Simon the Cananite, or Zelotes, is buried on the Bosphorus ; *Calend. Rom. ad diem 26 Octobris.* Local tradition also places his tomb in the ancient city of Anacopia or Phanacopia (in ancient maps Nicophia), where may yet be seen the ruins of an ancient Church.—*Voyage Du Bois*, tom. i. p. 276 ; *Klaproth, Voy. au Caucase*, tom. ii. p. 113 et 114.

^o According to Wakhusht (*Gheoghr.* p. 406), Nicophia, or Nicop'hsia, where Simon the Canaanite is said to have been buried, is the same as Bitchwinta, in Aphkhazeth, and on the sea-shore. Speaking of Bitchwinta, he says, "*Amas vhgoneb Nacop'hsiad—vinad-gan Nacop'hsias dap'hlul ars motsikuli Simon Cananeli*" — "I think it is Nacop'hia, since the Apostle Simon the Canaanite is buried in Nacop'hia."

Caucasus. At all events, a result of his preaching was to put a stop to the cruel and bloody custom of offering children in sacrifice to the gods of the country, and of devouring dead bodies,[†] after the manner of the Scythians, of the Massagetæ, and of other neighbouring nations; for King Rew,[§] who abolished these heathenish rites, won for himself in history the title of “the Just.”[§]

II. This great event of the enlightenment of Iberia

[†] Hence the local proverb, “*Carsneltha hmartebz Codman-eltha khuti mcudari*”—“The Carsinians owe five dead to the Codmanians,” alluding to the custom of eating the dead, either those who died naturally or those who fell in battle. This, however, may be only the expression of a deep-seated and hereditary hatred.—Wakhusht, Gheoghr. p. 8.

[§] In greater detail, in Georgian historians of Wakhtang, in the article about the XIXth king, Rew.

[§] There is nothing said of eating the dead in the History of Georgia, where we read, at p. 56, vol. i., that this Rew, son of Somkhet, and king of Georgia, took to wife the daughter of Logothetes, and with her brought in the goddess Aphrodite, which he set up on a hill near to Mtzkhetha. He seems, however, to have had some notions of Christianity, and was of a kind disposition, for *argha-ra-vis uteva Karthlsa shina qrmatha clwa*, he put a stop to the human sacrifices of boys, which, until his reign, were offered to idols, and *etsoda Rew marthali*—was called “Rew the Just.”

was preceded by a very important circumstance, which we read in detail in native writers. A certain Hebrew youth,⁹ by name Elioz, one of the soldiers that were about the Cross of our Lord, got for his share our Saviour's coat; and he, having wandered to the hill of Mtzkhetha,^h brought that coat with

⁹ According to Georgian and to Armenian historians, Hebrews settled in Iberia before the times of Nebuchadnezzar. There can be no doubt that, at the dispersion of the ten tribes by Salmanazar all over Asia, and when they settled on the banks of the Euphrates and in the wildest parts of Media, some of them may have found their way into Georgia. So writes Moses of Chorene, lib. i. ch. 8, 22.

^h Mtzkhetha—probably the Μεστλήτα of Ptolemy (*Ἰβηρ-Θέσις*, lib. v. c. 11), the χ being easily changed into λ—was, according to Georgian historians, built, between the rivers Mtcwari and Aragwi, in the province of Karthli, by Mtzkhethos, son of Karthlos, who made it his residence and the capital of the kingdom. Later, king Mirian built in his garden a church of wood, says Wakhusht, dedicated to the twelve Apostles, wherein our Saviour's coat and Elijah's mantle were deposited. Mirdat, XXVIth king, coated with cement and stones the principal pillar of that church, made, some say, of a miraculous tree; and over it he placed a cross that yields a wonderful balm for cures, whence its name, *Samironé*, "yielding balm." To the north of that church Mirian built the beautiful church of Ghthaeaba, at Samthavro, and dedicated to our Saviour. Wakhtang Gurgaslan placed

him.¹⁰ The miracles which then followed, as well as

there a bishop ; and later the same king made it the seat of a Catholicos. That church, repeatedly destroyed, and as often rebuilt, yet shows remains of its ancient splendour ; for in it were the kings of Georgia buried. Mtzketha is now only a large village, surrounded by mountains. — Wakhusht, Gheoghr. p. 208, s. 9.

¹⁰ Told more at length in the Acts of the Archeol. Commission, vol. iii. p. 235.

The coat of our Lord is emblazoned on the arms of the kingdom of Georgia. This was first done, we find, when the race of the Bagratides ascended the throne, towards the end of the sixth century. The first of this dynasty was Guram Bagratide, son adoptive of Stephen, last Georgian king of the house of the Sassanides, and at his death confirmed on the throne of Georgia by the Emperor Justinus II. with the title of Curopalate. This dynasty draws its origin from the King-Prophet David ; and for this reason did the kings of Georgia take the title of “Son of Jesse,” “David,” “Solomon,” &c. On their arms were emblazoned the sling that served to kill Goliath, David’s harp, a pair of scales, as emblem of the wisdom of Solomon, a lion, on which rested Solomon’s throne, and our Lord’s coat, with this inscription round : “*Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout ;*” and the great martyr and champion S. George slaying the dragon. All round this coat-of-arms is the inscription taken from the Psalms : “*The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it : of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.*”—Ps. cxxxii. 2. Constantinus Porphyrogenitus testifies in his book De Administr. Imp. cap. 45, that

the news of the spreading of the blessed teaching of Christianity all over the world, having reached the Jews of Iberia and of Mtskhetha, where those relics were kept, prepared the hearts of the heathens of Iberia to receive the Gospel; for, at the place, in the cathedral of Mtskhetha, where our Saviour's coat is kept, oil is said to have sometimes flowed; and this event is to this day commemorated by the Church of Iberia, on the feast of the 1st of October.

III. The light of Christianity ceased not to shine over that country ever after the preaching of S. Andrew. For we read in Irenæus that, in the hundredth year after Christ, the Roman bishop Clemens, who was sent by the Emperor Trajan into banishment, to the barren shores of the Black Sea, to the Taurian Chersonesus along the Cimmerian Bosphorus, was the means of carrying the glad tidings of the Gospel into many places of Iberia, by means of divers confessors from Colchis and from Iberia who were

the kings of Georgia descend from the prophet David, and that these descendants of David quitted Jerusalem about the year 500 of the Christian era.

converted to the Christian faith through his miracles and martyrdom.¹¹ Not long after, however, appeared in the Church of Colchis, Palm, himself a Colchian and Bishop of Pontus, together with his son, the heretic Marcion, against whose errors Tertullian inveighs loudly.¹²

IV. Afterwards, the Christian religion was lastly and finally established in Iberia through the preaching of Nonna or Nina.¹³ This holy woman, born in

¹¹ Lib. i. c. 9, and the following is also found in Baronius: "Partem illam Iberiæ, quæ vergit ad mare Ponticum, Colchicam olim sub Trajano imperatore prædicatione S. Clementis Papæ Evangelium subcepisse, et Irenæi quoque testificatione constat, longe ante hoc tempore (327 ann.) Iberos Christianam fidem amplexatos esse. Qui autem juxta Caucasum incolunt Iberi inferiores vergentes ad Mare Caspium, ii putantur sub Constantino Christi fidem sectati esse."—Annal. Hist. Eccl. tom. iii. in the events of the year 327, iv. and xv.

¹² Lib. i. contra Marcionem.

¹³ In our historians S. Nina is not called a *captive*. The name of this holy woman is most likely a proper name. It is not known with certainty whether or not it may have been the name of the monastic order which she took, as some think, and as S. Jerome, in his Epist. ad Eustacium de Custodia Virginitatis, explains in this wise: "Et quia maritorum expertæ dominatum, viduitatis præferunt libertatem, castæ vocantur et nonnæ."

Without contradicting the statement that, as Rodiginus,

Colastri, a small town of Cappadocia, was the daughter of a certain Zabulon, and was brought up by a God-fearing old woman, by name Sarah Bethlehemlianka, keeper of a temple ; but Nina was both directed and established in the faith by her uncle on her mother's side, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Historians tell us that her parents, having long been without offspring, and having received her after a vow, consecrated her to God, and that themselves afterwards removed to the Jordan. S. Nina went to Rome with the blessing of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and at last decided on devoting herself to the work of preaching the Gospel in Iberia, known to her as the place where the Lord's coat was kept. While thus disposed, she was strengthened by heavenly visions ; and, as an earnest of the success which awaited her, she received at the hands of the B. V. Mary a

lib. v. c. 12, writes, religious women in Egypt were called *nonnæ*, nuns, we may still think that this common name in the mouth of the first Christians was afterwards changed into a proper name, as we find in the name of the mother of S. Gregory of Nazianzus. Heribertus, in suo *Onomastico*, speaks of this in detail.

cross¹⁴ made of the wood of the vine. While on her

¹⁴ Armenian historians have a great deal to say about this cross, called the Cross of Nina. That cross was already in the hands of the Armenians after the martyrdom of *Susanna* or *Shushanika*, who, according to Georgian historians, suffered in the middle of the sixth century, but in the fifth, according to Armenian authors, at the hand of her husband Vasken, because she renounced the worship of fire. Armenian writers calculate the years since it was discovered. Vartan writes concerning this cross, that, after being used as a sign or standard in the wars with the Greeks, it was brought back a second time to the town of Vanadad, whence it received the name of the Cross of Vanadad.

The Armenian Church celebrates the memory of the victory won over the Greeks, and of the wonders witnessed by the generals of the Armenian army, by a feast, kept, at present, on the Sunday within ten days after Ascension Day. Our own native historians, however, relate that, by order of King Theimuraz II., and by the hands of zealous pastors of the Church, this cross was, during the troublous times of the Church, taken to the mountains and placed in the Church of the B. V. Mary in Ananura. After that it was taken to Russia by the metropolitan Timothe in 1749, and given to the Princess Bakara Wakhtangovitsa, in Moscow. At last, the Georgian Prince Alexandrovitch, Bakara's grandson, offered it, in 1801, to the Emperor Alexander, who sent it back into Georgia as a relic of the Georgian Church. From that time it has been preserved by the side of S. Nina's image, in the Cathedral Church of the Synod of Sion, in Tiflis.—Mich. Tchamtchean, *Hist. of Ann.* II. p. 87 and 599 ; and Armen. Synaxarion for the 20th of March.

way to Iberia she succeeded in turning many to Christ; and although in Armenia she was exposed to persecutions and to trouble, she was miraculously rescued from the captivity which her fellow-travellers Ripsima and Gaiana had prepared for her. On reaching the borders of Iberia, she planted the first cross on the mountains of Djavakhethi,¹ and preached the Gospel in the towns of Akhalkalaki,¹ Urnis, and at last in Mtskhetha, the capital of Iberia. There, a festival in honour of the gods Armaz and Zaden¹⁵ afforded her an opportunity of

¹ The Djawakhethi is the district extending from the Lake Phanawar to the Mtcwari, given in possession by Mtskhethos to his son Djawakhos.—Wakh. Gheog. p. 72.

¹ There is more than one town of this name in Georgia. The one here alluded to is doubtless the town of Akhalkalaki, in Djawakhethi. Urnis was built by Uphlos, son of Karthlos, and is situate to the west of Ruis. It was once a bishopric.

¹⁵ "Il est facile," writes the Academician Brosset, "de reconnaître dans ce nom le *θεός* ou Jupiter des Grecs, le *Quadata* ou *Swadata*, *Zend*;" i.e., le Dieu, donné, créé de lui-même, d'où se sont formé le *khouda*, "Dieu," Persan; le "Gott," Allemand; le "God," Anglais; le "Khouti," Georgien. — *Géogr. de Georgie* par Wakhushht, p. 2.

[Zaden—M. Brosset, the editor and translator of Wakhushht,

beginning her preaching with an earnest prayer to God ; after which arose a dreadful storm, accompanied by unusual hailstones, that dispersed the people and the court assembled at the feast, and, in the words of a writer of that time, “threw down the idols and cast them into pits, into clefts of the rocks, and into holes of the earth, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of His might.”¹⁸

Three days after this event, ascribed by the heathens to the anger of their gods, S. Nina went to Mtzkhetha, preached Christ, and in His name granted a son to the wife of the king’s gardener, with whom she was staying, and who, hitherto, had

says that it is easy to recognise *ŷeôs* (*sic*) in Zaden. But others will find it very difficult. I can find no other account of this idol, either in Tchamtchean, Indjijean, Eznig, Liber-Adami, Chwolson, Borhan-i-qâte, or in any other book within reach. As it is evidently more nearly allied to “Satan” than to *ŷeôs* or to *θεός*, and as it is mentioned together with Armazd (Ormuzd), and coupled with it, perhaps is it meant for the principle of evil, as Armazd is for that of good, and instead of Ahrimân ; unless “Zadea” be in any way allied to Ized, Yesht, or to Isates.—Transl.]

Words of a cotemporary of S. Nina.

had no child. In that house, she also healed the son of a widow by placing him on her bed and covering him with her own sackcloth. This miracle drew on S. Nina the notice of the king's wife, daughter of the commander-in-chief of Pontus, who had long been suffering from a severe illness, and who also had some knowledge of Christianity, but was not yet converted to it. S. Nina, having restored her to health, won to herself disciples and hearers from among the queen's attendants; the Jewish priest Abiathar and his daughter Sidonia; the mother of the youth she had recovered from his sickness, and a courtier; and, lastly, she granted recovering of sight to the king himself, who had suddenly been struck blind while hunting on the heights of Thkboth.* The result of this

* Thkboth.—This mountain of Karthli is mentioned by Wakhusht (Gheoghr. p. 216) as being to the west of the river Ksani, *romelsa zeda moektsa mep'he Mirian Christianed*, "on which mountain King Mirian turned Christian." It is situated to the west of Mtzkhetha and not far from it. Sidonia relates (Karthlis Tskhovr, p. 86, *seq.*) that King Mirian, angry at the success of S. Nina's preaching, called together his councillors and told them his advice was to ill-treat *qovelni mosavni djwar-tsmulisani*, all those who hoped in the Crucified, and to

cure was, that the king, known by the name of

show greater devotedness to the worship of the gods of Karthli. "Persuade ye my wife Nana," said he, "to repent and to abandon the faith of the Crucified; and if she will not, I will give up my love for her, and otherwise bring her to grief." The courtiers assented, though unwilling at first, and ashamed to do it openly. Meanwhile, the king went through the whole neighbourhood, and up, even, to the very top of the high mountain of Thkhoth, whence he could see eastward from Casp (a town near the Ksan) to Up'hlis-tsikhé westward. There, at mid-day, in broad daylight, the sun over him was darkened, and a dark, endless night followed and surrounded him on all sides. His attendants wandered away from him in all directions full of alarm and anxiety, and left alone the king who, with fear and trembling, groped about the forest; at last halted in one place and gave himself up for lost. As he stood there thinking, he reasoned thus within himself: "I called upon my gods but found no relief; now will I call upon Him whom Nina preaches on His cross—on Him that is laid on it; for I am, as it were, alive in hell. Who knows whether this have happened because of the people of the land, or on my account? If it be because of me that this calamity is come upon us, then, O God of Nina, turn this my night into day, and make me to see my country, and I will extol thy name, *aghvmartho dzeli djwarisa da thaqwanis-vstse mas*, I will set up the wood of the Cross and worship it, and I will myself build a house of prayer and become obedient in the Greek Faith to Nina."

No sooner had he ended his prayer than the sun shone overhead; then the king alighted from his horse, and stood

Mirian, of the race of Chosroes, renounced idolatry under the teaching of S. Nina, and was by her baptized, together with his whole house and with all the inhabitants of the capital. He then sent (A.D. 318) an embassy to the new Rome (Constantinople), to the Emperor Constantine, requesting to have a bishop and priests sent him. While awaiting the arrival of those men, who were to give him advice, and to consult with him for the preaching of the Gospel in his dominions, the king levelled his own vine-garden, and thereon built a temple. There is a tradition that, while that temple was building, the workmen, having set up six principal pillars, were not able to set up the seventh; but that, at S. Nina's instance, angels appeared who, in sight of the whole people, took hold of that pillar and set it up in its place. The king, astonished at this manifestation of God's help and power, brought together abundance of silver,

on that spot, spread his hands to the east, and said: "Thou, O God, art God over all gods and Lord over all lords—the God of whom Nina speaks, and Thy name is praised from the creation of the world, under heaven and over the earth beneath it."

of gold, and of precious stones, for the building and adorning of that temple.

V. Soon after came the patriarch Eustathius¹⁷ from Antioch, with priests, with much clergy, and with the heir to the throne of Georgia, Bakurius (Bakar), who had hitherto been kept as a hostage by the Greeks. They brought, as presents to the king, consecrated relics of our Lord's passion,¹⁸ a

¹⁷ The coming of Eustathius, patriarch of Antioch, into Iberia is not mentioned either by Greek historians or by any of the Byzantine writers. This account is taken from documents made over by Emperors of Constantinople and by Kings of Georgia to the Iberian Monastery on Mount Athos, and preserved there unto this day.

¹⁸ Constantine the Great, having discovered the Cross of our Salvation about this time, and having collected together many bones of saints and other offerings, sent to the new Christian king the foot-board and a nail of our Saviour's Cross, which are to this day preserved in the Synod of the Ascension at Moscow. They were brought from Georgia to Moscow by King Artchil in 1686. The valuable crown in which is set that nail is a work of the thirteenth century, as I was assured by M. Brosset in 1836; for, as one sees by the Greek inscription engraved thereon, it was made by order of David, King of all Georgia, and son of Queen Rusudana. The letter of Constantine to King Mirian is given by ancient historians of Georgia, albeit not one of the Byzantine historians alludes to it.

few bones of saints, and images of our Saviour and of the V. Mary, his mother ; and, by their preaching, they wrought out the conversion of the whole of Iberia to the Christian faith, from the shores of the Black Sea almost to the mountains of Albania, and from the range of Caucasus to the frontiers of Persia. The first temple was dedicated to the name of the Saviour, and the second to the twelve Apostles. Having thus built up and established peace and concord in the new bond of the Christian faith, the patriarch returned to Antioch, but not before he had consecrated the presbyter John as Bishop of Iberia. The king, instructed by S. Nina, then sought out the place where the coat of our Lord was kept ; and he ascertained, by divers signs and tokens, that it was kept where the seventh pillar was miraculously set up by the angels. In remembrance of the discovery of this relic, the king dedicated to S. Nina the first chapel in the temple of Mtzkhetha ; and, at her request, four crosses were made out of a cedar growing in the town, and not only venerated, but all but worshipped for its beauty by the heathens. These crosses, intended as tokens of the church just founded, were planted,

one on the hill over against Mtzkhetha, on the other side of the river Aragwi, where is now the temple dedicated to the Cross of our Salvation; the second was hoisted upon the hill Thkboth, on the spot where King Mirian was struck with blindness; the third was placed in the town of Kakheth, called Boda;¹ and the fourth was set up in Udjarma.^m Both from these crosses and from the miraculous pillar that went already by the name of *Djivotvorets*, "life-giving," and *Myrototchivi*, "flowing with oil," were sundry cures and other miracles wrought, to the still greater strengthening and confirming of the people in the faith.

S. Nina, having witnessed the conversion of

¹ Boda, or Bodbé, on the river Boda, in Kakhethi, is the name of a large and beautiful church where S. Nina died, and lies buried. Her tomb was built and the church was adorned by Bakar, XXVth king of Georgia, and it became a bishopric. The Bodbel or Bishop of Bodbé is held first bishop of Kakhethi in honour of S. Nina.—Wakhusht, Gheogh. p. 308, *seq.*

^m Udjarma is a town of Kakhethi, situated between the mountains of Kakhethi and those of Koukhethi, built by the II^d king Saurmag of Georgia. This is, however, doubtful. It was restored by Gurgaslan, who made of it a fortified city; but it is now a village.

Iberia to the Christian faith, and seeing the country established therein, withdrew from the noise of the world, and retired to the mountain pass of Bodbe, in Kakheth; though not until she had, with her own efforts, built, in several parts of Iberia, temples, dedicated to her fellow-countryman, martyr, and confessor, S. George,¹⁹ and had, according to Moses

¹⁹ S. Nina was akin to the martyr S. George, and after his martyrdom she was raised to the honour of a place in his Church. At that time Georgia chose him for her patron, and the kingdom placed his image on the national escutcheon; and this honour paid to his name soon spread East and West. (Allgem. Gesch. der christl. Relig. u. k. v. Neander. Hamb. 1829, 8vo.) He was venerated especially by Anglo-Saxons, and afterwards the English chose him also for their patron saint. In the fourteenth century the French took this saint as witness and patron in their judicial duels; at last the Russian eagle wore him on his breast. (See grosses vollstand. Universal Lexicon aller Wissensch. tom. x. 1735, Leipz.) The general distribution of the images of this saint, all over the Crimea, shows that he has always been held in special veneration by the people of that country. (Hist. of the Russian Hierarchy, vol. iii. p. 689.) And here it may not be out of place to mention, for the benefit of Archeologues, who would seek into the origin of St. George being represented on a horse slaying the dragon, that in Georgia proper he never was represented on foot, but in the city of Imereth

of Chorene,²⁰ strengthened the faith of many of the inhabitants of the outskirts of Iberia. But when, at last, S. Nina felt herself about to depart from this world, she sent for the king and the queen, gave them her last injunctions, blessed them, received the Body and Blood of Christ at the hands of the Bishop, promised to bequeath her remains to the prior of her convent in Bodbe, and died. Such are the principal facts recorded in history respecting the conversion of Iberia to the Christian faith.

VI. The truth of these accounts is well authenticated by the additional testimony of writers of the eleventh, twelfth, and nineteenth centuries, who grounded their history on private documents of a great age relative to the conversion of Georgia to the Christian faith, written from the mouth of S. Nina by Sudka (Sophia), queen of Kakheth, who had been converted by S. Nina. The Arme-

called *Khoni* (Onoguris according to Procopius), and in the Church, which was once a Cathedral, there is an image of S. George represented without a horse.

²⁰ Lib. ii. ch. 83.

nian records of these events differ in some particulars;²¹ this, however, may be easily accounted

²¹ Moses of Chorene writes that S. Nina, whom he calls *Nunia*, feeling persuaded of the king's entire readiness to receive the faith, sent to S. Gregory, the Illuminator of Armenia, faithful men with the intelligence of what she had already accomplished, and asked for further instruction as to what she was to do in order to establish Christianity in Iberia. S. Gregory directed that idols should be thrown down, as he was himself doing at the time, and that the Cross should be set up in their stead, as a proper object of worship, until the Lord sent them a pastor and guide. In obedience to these directions S. Nina threw down the idol of the thundering Aramazda, which she also caused to be cast into the foaming stream; for it stood near to the city at a place of common resort, and the inhabitants worshipped it every morning with their families, as it stood upright before their houses. And he who wished to offer a sacrifice to it had to cross the river and lay it before the temple of the idol. The principal inhabitants of the city having raised a tumult, said: "Whom shall we worship instead of idols?" Then were they told that they should fall down to the sign of the Cross; and so readily did they agree to this, that they removed the Cross on to a suitable hill to the east of the town and separated from it by a small stream; and all bowed to it at the morning tide, from the roofs of their houses. But when they went over to the top of the hill, they found that tree in an uncouth state, the work, they thought, of a very mean and unskilled man; and for that reason many heeded

for by national prejudices. A certain inaccuracy in dates may also be forgiven, considering the want of books in olden times, and the necessity of handing down information from father to son through tradition. On the other hand, many authentic records of great importance for the cotemporary history of those days may have perished during

it not, saying the whole wood was full of such timber, and treated it with no respect whatever. But God in His mercy having looked upon their slight of that Cross, sent from heaven a pillar of cloud, filling the wood with delicious odours, and at the same time causing agreeable voices of sweet music to be heard, and a light setting forth the outline and the form of that Cross of wood which stood under it, together with twelve stars. The Iberians, astonished at this sight, worshipped it all with one accord, and from it received various gifts of healing. S. Nunia then departed in order to preach the Gospel in other provinces of Iberia, gifted as she was with a speech simple and powerful, yet free from all false eloquence; and withdrawing herself from the world and from things of the world, or rather, more correctly, being nailed to the death of the Cross, she devoted herself to the preaching of the word of God. I might compare her with the Apostles, because she preached the Gospel, beginning from Clargor, which is near to the borders of the Alani and of the Caspii, as Agathangel (a cotemporary Armenian author) relates.—Moses of Chorene, lib. ii. ch. 83.

the never-ending troubles and civil wars of Georgia. Rufinus, also, who lived in the days of Constantine, and who wrote at length the conversion of Georgia²² to the faith of Christ, declares that he relates what he himself heard from the lips of King Bakurius²³ at Jerusalem. While historians like

²² The historian Theophanoff places the conversion of Iberia to the Christian faith in the year 318, that is, in the tenth year of the reign of Constantine. Baronius places it in the year 327, and others in 335 (Johan. Funccii Comment. in Chronologiam, lib. vi.) Du Bois, who refutes the statements of Georgian and other writers, places, not without foundation, the conversion of Iberia in the year 276, or a little after. (Voyage autour du Caucase, tome ii. p. 16.)

²³ Socrates, lib. i. cap. 20; Sozomen, lib. ii. cap. 7; Theodoritus, Hist. Eccles. lib. i. cap. 24; and Rufinus, lib. ii. cap. 20, whose words respecting the authenticity of his account of the conversion of Iberia are these: "Hæc nobis ita gesta fidelissimus vir Bacarius, gentis ipsius rex, et apud nos Domesticorum Comes, cui summa erat cura et religionis et veritatis, exposuit, cum nobiscum Palestini tunc limitis dux, in Hierosolymis satis unanimiter degeret." Of the zeal of Bakurius for the good of the Empire, writes Socrates, lib. vi. cap. 29; Niceph. Coll. lib. xii. cap. 30; and Zozim. lib. iv. cap. 7, who call him *ἐξω δὲ πόλεως κακοηθείας ἀνὴρ*. I lately discovered in the library of the Cathedral of Mtskhetha, a MS. of Ephrem of Mt. Athos of the ninth century, containing a narrative of the conversion of Iberia to the Christian faith.

Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoritus, and others, who wrote after the time of Constantine, likewise agree with native writers and historians ; except in this one particular, that they call S. Nina a captive, *mulier captiva*, of the Iberians, and the king who protected her Bakar²⁴ (Bakurius), and not Mirian.

²⁴ It would seem that Bakarius, or Bakurius, who told the conversion of Iberia to Rufinus, was not Mirian's son.

CHAPTER II.

The Church of Iberia is reckoned to the Patriarchate of Antioch—Pilgrimage of Mirian to Jerusalem—During the reign of Bakur (Bakar) the Church spreads and triumphs under the shadow of the Cross, over both heathens within and enemies without—The kings Miridat and Varaz-Bakar protect the Church—Miridat, the Iberian Julian—Archil drives out of the Church heresies and the worship of fire—His sainted queen Sandukhta—Intentions of Archbishop Mobidakh against the orthodox Faith.



THE Iberians, in receiving pastors from Constantinople, received with them all the rites of the Greek Church which were coming into general use, and also admitted the decrees of the first Œcumenic Synod. Meanwhile, their Church, only just come into existence,

was reckoned to the Patriarchate of Antioch.¹ And King Mirian, wishing to acquaint himself with the places of the sacred events mentioned in Scripture, and also to worship the newly-discovered relic,^a went, by the advice of S. Nina, to Jerusalem, where he had an interview with the Emperor Constantine, and begged of him the site in Jerusalem called Lotosa, whereon to build a convent to the name of the Holy Cross.²

II. After his death, his son and successor Bakar (A.D. 342—364), who, like his father, was zealous in spreading the faith of Christ, caused the Gospel to be preached a second time among all the tribes of his kingdom ; the result of which was to add to

¹ Even at present the Patriarch of Antioch is styled "Iberian" in his title ; thus, Patriarch of the Holy City of Antioch, Syria, Iberia, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, and of the whole East.—Muravieff, *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 199.

^a That is, the Cross said to have been discovered by Helena.

² From the *Travels of the Georgian Archbishop Timothe, or Timotheus, to the holy places* (in MS.)—Muravieff, *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 344, 3rd edit.

[The *Travels of the Archbishop Timothe* were published in Georgian by P. Ioselian at Tiflis in 1852.—Transl.]

the Church of Christ numbers of Ap'hkhazes, of Caucasians, and of Khebsures.^b Bakar, having raised temples everywhere, gave them in charge to the clergy, directing these at the same time to establish the faith, and by means of the kindly precepts of heavenly teaching to soften the rude customs and manners of the wild inhabitants of the mountains. Without undue constraint, he himself baptized nearly all his subjects, all of whom willingly received Christian teachers. Having thus established a general peace throughout his dominions under the hallowed shadow of the faith of Christ, he bound the whole into one large family or kingdom. With all this, however, he did not avoid a rupture of peace and of good understanding with the king of Persia. For, while a war from that quarter was little to be expected, owing to the kings of Georgia being by Bakar allied to the then reigning house³ of Persia, yet a war was not long

^b The Khebsures inhabited the tract of country between the Black and the White Aragwis, north of Mtzkhetha, and at the foot of the Caucasus.

³ Mirian, Bakar's father, who received the Christian faith

in breaking out, though it were only against the resistless influence of the name of Christ ; for it was waged on the occasion of the Georgians having embraced the Christian faith, and being thus fast united with the Greeks. But the Georgians took up arms in the name of the Faith and of the Holy Cross, and overcame and defeated the Persians. This first holy war ended in a triumph over the enemy ; but how much misery followed from other lamentable wars, ruinous to the country, and fatal to the kingdom ! Placed as the Georgians were, on the outskirts of the then known world, they formed a kind of barrier against the heresies that troubled the Greek Empire, already on the decline ; yet, considering the freshening efforts of the fire-worshippers^o in the neighbouring countries, who can

and introduced it into his kingdom, was of the race of Chosroes, and first of that line of Georgian kings. He was brought out of Persia at the request of the Iberians, when the royal house of P'harnabaz came to an end. At that time Chosroes was king of Persia, and Mirian was the first of the Sassanides on the throne of Georgia.

^o The worship of fire probably originated, but at all events was rife, in the province of Atropatene, which adjoined Iberia. (Moses of Chorene, lib. ii. c. 21.) It is the

tell what the end of the kingdom of Georgia would have been if the Persians had succeeded in stretching their rule as far as the borders of the Black Sea, and in setting up a navy, of so much importance to themselves? This, at least, is certain, that the Georgians, often routed, and sometimes enslaved, firmly and courageously kept the faith they had once embraced. The kingdom of Georgia, during the space of fifteen centuries, hardly presents one instance of a regulation that was not owing either to ravages, to aggression, or to cruel affliction on the part of the enemies of Christ. Yet those fifteen centuries of misfortune have not weakened either the faith or the Christian endurance of the people.

III. We read in history that, after the favourable ending of the war above alluded to, all the parts

present Azerbijān, and its ancient name of Atropatene may mean either "protected by fire" or "fire-protecting," according to whether we derive it from the loc. *Athrā pāta*, or from the gen. *Athrō pāta*. (Windischman, *Zoroas. Stud.* p. 10, *seq.*; *Justi Lexicon. g. v.*; and Kleuker, *Z. A.* vol. i. p. 49, 53. Spiegel, *Erān*, p. 60, *seq.*) Shahrestāni, p. 175, *seq.*, makes Zerdhasht, or Zoroaster, a native of Azerbijān, where he is said to have instituted the worship of fire.

of Iberia which, under the banner of the Cross, had overcome the tribes of the Caucasus were then united in the one kingdom of Iberia; and the king, who sat in Mtskhetha, then became the Sovereign of the tribes of the Caucasus, which hitherto would none of his rule. Bakar, occupied in organizing his country and in putting the faith upon a firm footing, fetched from Greece, for the further enlightenment of the nation, teachers and instructors, that might lay the foundation of schools in which the Greek and the Syriac languages should be taught. He singled out the Greek language from among the languages of the country for the service of God, and he ordered the translation of many religious books into the native dialects; he adorned divers temples already existing, and himself built others, generally in places celebrated for great gatherings in the dark ages of heathenism. Thus, for instance, he built a temple on the site of one formerly sacred to the gods Armaz and Zaden.⁴

⁴ Until the days of Christianity the religion of the Iberians was heathen. Their idols were Armaz (Hormazd), Zaden (Izida?), Gats, Gaïm, Aïnan, and Danaïn. Moses of

He appointed bishops for the greater increase of the faith, by means of a closer and more careful inspection; and, wishing to do his utmost for the beautifying of temples, and for the edification of Divine worship, he introduced chanting, according to the Greek metre.⁵ He is generally acknowledged to have founded the eparchy of Tsilcan,^d and to have built the temple of that place in honour of the B. V. Mary, so celebrated in the times that

Chorene mentions also the idol Bagan as being worshipped by the Georgians, and agrees with Hercules, cap. xxx. King Rew, having married a Greek woman, set up on the heights of Mtskhetha a statue of Aphrodite. In the course of time fire-worship was introduced into Iberia, and continued there, more or less, until it was put a stop to in Persia.

⁵ The Georgian Church music and hymns bear a great similarity to the pathetic melodies of Greece. It is at present fallen off, because there is no choral music in the Georgian Church. In the Georgian song there are no syllables without meaning, such as *avor, avor*, in the Greek, at the end of words.—See Theory of Music, De Kalve, vol. ii. p. 96.

^d *Aman aghashena ecclesia Tsilcnisa*, "He built the church of Tsilcan," is the only information the Karthlis Tskhovr. give us on the subject (at p. 101, under the reign of Bakar, or Bakurius). But Wakhusht (Gheoghr. p. 214) adds that this church, built with a cupola, is the residence of the Bishop of Mukhran, of the Black and of the White Aragwis and of Bozateth.

followed, and even now renowned for miracles^o and for the tomb of Iese, Bishop of Tsilcan, one of the thirteen Fathers who came from Syria.

IV. The Church, so lately planted, enjoyed entire peace during the reign of Miridat, successor of Bakar, as well as in the days of the third Archbishop, Jacob, named John, and afterwards Job, by birth an Armenian, and deacon of the Armenian Archbishop Nersès I.[†] The building in Imereth of the cathedral of Khoni,⁶ celebrated even at present,

^o Wakhusht (p. 214) states that S. Iso of Tsilcan (called Ise or Issei by our author), *Tqwilianidam tsarmoigho qawardjniš threwith ra, romelsa mosdeoda amushacoth tsqali, do moigho Tsilcans*, drew out from Tqwilian a furrow with his crosier, which water followed forthwith; water was thus by him brought to Tsilcan, and flows there to this day. This circumstance is related differently below at Chapter IV., where it is said of the river Ksan.

[†] This Nersès I., or Nersès the Great, was Archbishop in the third year of Arsaces. He was son of Athanak son of Husig, who was the son of Verthan himself son of S. Gregory. His history is told at length by Moses of Chorene, lib. iii. c. 20, and by Michael Tchamtchean, vol. i. p. 134, 135, *seq.* See also, for an account of Bishop Jacob or Job, Karthlis Tskhovr. p. 102.

⁶ This is probably the temple of Onogur, mentioned by Agathias I. iii. p. 77.

and that of numerous churches in other parts of the kingdom that completed the establishing and confirming the provinces of Clarjeth and of Djavakhet in the faith, was due entirely to the pious zeal of Miridat III., worthy son of Bakar. But this happy state of things was soon disturbed, through the negligence of his successor, Varaz-Bakar (A.D. 379—393). An attack from the Persians, called forth probably by the conduct of Bishop Abda, who, having set fire to the chief heathen temple in Persia, refused to rebuild it, and the breaking asunder, from some unknown cause, of the bond of union with the Greeks, were followed by the laying waste of Iberia by the Greek Emperor Theodosius, who required and took hostages from the nation. The peace of the Church and of

[This cathedral of Khoni, west of Khuthais, was the residence of the Bishop of Wacé. It was formerly dependent on the Archbishop of Karthli; but, after the separation of Karthli from Imereth, this church had a bishop of its own.—Wakhusht, Gheoghr. p. 354.

The Karthlis Tskhovreba says (at p. 102) of Miridat, that "*aghashenna Ecclesiiani* he built churches" in Clarjeth and elsewhere, but does not mention the church of Khoni in particular.—Transl.]

the kingdom was again renewed at the instance of Archbishop Elias, who purchased it of the Persians at the price of gold.

V. But the vicissitudes of the Church increased when, after King P'harsman, who had restored the temples destroyed by the Persians, and confirmed both the faith and the kingdom, Miridat IV., who knew neither how to do well nor how to repent, ascended the throne of Iberia. He had despised the faith of his own nation, and purposed to follow in the steps of Julian; but God, who had exposed his faithful people to a trial of their faith, and who out of great misfortunes brings forth happiness for men, allowed the Persians to invade Iberia and to take possession of the country; and He thus, on the one hand, put a stop to the persecution the Church endured, and, on the other hand, He laid the foundation of the greatness, of the glory, and of the power that distinguished the following reigns of Archil and of Wakhtang Gorhaslan.

VI. Archil (A.D. 413—446), son of Miridat IV., did not imitate his father's vices; but he rooted out the remains of heathenism, and purified the religion from all mixture of heresies and of heathenish

customs; he expelled the fire-worshippers, and turned their temple into a Christian church and house of prayer; and he happily ended a war begun by the Persians at the instigation of their Magi, and of other followers of fire-worship in Iberia. With the Bishop's blessing, he married a woman of another religion, who was called Sandukhta, and whom he converted to the Christian faith.[§] For her sake, and for her own especial use, was the New Testament then for the first time translated into the Georgian lan-

[§] Our author gives a different account from that found in the *Karthlis Tskhovreba*, vol. i. p. 109, *seq.*, where we read that Barzabod, Eris-thaw of Qarabag (Rani), did not, like other petty princes of those parts, oppose King Archil, but continued on a friendly footing with him. This Barzabod had a remarkably handsome daughter, called Sagdukht, of whom Mirdat, Archil's son, became enamoured. He requested his father to ask Barzabod to give her to him in marriage, and Archil did so; Barzabod then gave his daughter to Mirdat, who was then made by his father Eris-thaw of Samshwilde, where he resided with Sagdukht, and for whose sake he fetched men learned in the Greek and Georgian languages, who translated the New Testament for the use of Sagdukht, Archil's daughter-in-law, and not wife, as P. Ioselian states.

guage.⁷ Being deeply affected with the truths

⁷ The books used for Divine service in the churches of Georgia were read in Greek in the first beginning of Christianity. Afterwards several of them were translated into Georgian in schools established by Greek preachers, wherein the Greek language was taught with the view of establishing the services of the Church on the primitive rules of Christianity, indispensable in a country just converted from heathenism. It was probably about this time, when schools were founded, that lived the first translators of Holy Scripture from the Assyrian (Syriac) tongue and of Church books from the Greek. They had studied at Jerusalem, probably under the protection of the Georgian prince Tatian, who, in the fifth century, built there a monastery. This circumstance, however, which is not noticed by historians, does not prevent us from reckoning among the translators of Holy Scripture, and of all Church books from the Greek into Georgian, Euthymius and Georgius Sviatogorets, who lived in the xiith century, and who wrote in a style pure, well rounded, and flowing, which is held hitherto as a pattern of literature, both sacred and secular. The necessity of having Church books for the use of Divine service in the churches of Iberia would not prevent the kings of Georgia from providing the Church, at an earlier period, with books intended to establish the people in the faith and in good works ; even though this be not noticed by native writers.

Georgian historians ascribe the invention of Georgian letters to King P'harnabaz I., cotemporary of Alexander the Great. According to Moses of Chorene, however, the Georgian alphabet was invented by the learned Mesrob,

of the Gospel, she built in Mtskhetha a temple to the memory of the proto-martyr S. Stephen, and called it Sion.⁸ But she gave yet greater proof

who came into Iberia during the reign of King Archil (A.D. 413—446), and who, together with Zalei, a man learned in the Armenian and Greek languages, fixed the Georgian alphabet of thirty-eight letters. Both the king of Georgia, whom Moses of Chorene calls Bakar, and Bishop Moses contributed to it. Mesrob intrusted the school which he had founded and divided into two parts to professors of his own, Khortsenski and Moses Taronenski, and himself went into Albania to the king thereof, Arzval, and to Bishop Jeremiah. It is most probable that until that time the Church service was performed in Greek in the Churches of Iberia, as well, indeed, as in Armenia (Mos. of Chor. lib. iii. c. 54). The Georgian characters are twofold—civil and ecclesiastical. Some people doubt the existence of the civil characters even in the xivth century, because they nowhere appear, either on ancient coins or on monuments. But their similarity in form to the Sanscrit characters (Devanagari) was already remarked by Antekil (Anquetil?). A curious comparison of them may be seen in *Eléments de la Langue Géorgienne*, par M. Brosset : Paris, 1838, pp. 6—8.

⁸ Temples without cupolas are by the Georgians called *Sions*. But at first this name was also given to temples of God dedicated to the assumption of the B. V. Mary, and copied from the like temple at Jerusalem, existing at Gethsemane ; and so much the more as the B. V. Mary is by the Prophets mysteriously mentioned as *Sion*.

of her zeal for the Christian religion and for orthodox principles when she determined to defend the Church against the fatal intentions of Archbishop Mobidakh, a Persian by birth.

VII. This false teacher, pretending to be a faithful Christian, fain would make an evil use of his ecclesiastical power, and change ceremonies and institutions in the rites and in the hierarchy of the Church, withal preaching Arianism, which in those days was fast overspreading the East, under the protection of the Emperor Valens, who was addicted to that heresy. Hiding a wicked heart under the mask of religion, Mobidakh persecuted the clergy under the pretence of misconduct on their part, and cut asunder from union with the Church all sincerely orthodox men. At last, and feigning to act as pastor of his flock, he made openly known his meaning and doctrine in a letter which he published for general reading. But Bishop Michael, encouraged in this work by the pious queen, unmasked Mobidakh, as an enemy of the Church, and had him deposed by the Synod which was sitting at that very time. He consigned to the flames Mobidakh's letter, and to anathema his

teaching, and then re-established the former rites of the Church approved and sanctioned by the Church of Antioch. Then was the chair of Archbishop Mobidakh occupied by Michael, who was a Greek.

CHAPTER III.

Fire-worship in Iberia—The martyr Rajden—Weakening of Christianity among the hill-tribes of the Caucasus—Sad invasion of the Iberian Church by heresies—Good deeds of King Wakhtang Gorhaslan—The Church of Iberia takes the title of Independent (*αὐτοκέφαλος*)—The first Catholicos thereof, and his rule.



AKHTANG I. (A.D. 446—449) was only seven years old when his father died. The queen, his mother, renowned for her wisdom and for her piety, who had incurred the enmity of the Persians and of their king her father, only to protect the Christian faith, found herself at last obliged to allow the worship of fire in her dominions, with the sanction of the Archbishop Michael, who, as we saw, had been fetched

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from Greece into Georgia. As the preaching of the Christian faith prevailed among the people, the fire-worshippers from the first made little progress. Then the conversion to the faith of Christ of one of the Persian Magi, by name Rajden, and his patient endurance of a cruel death at the hands of his countrymen, who, says the learned Bishop Nicolas, nailed him naked to a cross and tore him in pieces, had a good influence and led the people to profess the Christian faith. The earthly remains of that martyr were laid in the cathedral of Nikozi,^a and the Georgian Church¹ keeps the 3rd of August to his memory.

^a Nikoz, or Nikozi, with a beautiful church built by Wakhtang Gorhaslan, on the Great Liakhwi, north of the Kur, in the district of Sawakhtango, in Karthli. In that church were the relics of S. Rajden laid. There are two towns of the same name, not far from each other; one on the left, the other on the right bank of the Great Liakhwi. —Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 252. *

¹ The Georgian Church commemorates the following saints :—

- Jan. 8. S. Abo.
- „ 14. S. Nina the Illuminatress.
- „ 19. S. Antoni of Martkop'h.

II. But that act of cruelty on the part of the

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- Jan. 26. S. David III., king of Georgia, and defender of the Faith.
- April 15. S. Sukhi, martyr, and his kinsmen.
- May 7. S. John Zedasni, and the thirteen Fathers who came with him from Syria.
- „ 9. S. Shio of Mgvim.
- „ 13. Euthymius of Mt. Athos.
- „ 18. S. David and Taritchan.
- June 21. S. Archil and Suarsab, kings and martyrs.
- „ 27. S. George of Mt. Athos.
- July 12. S. John and Gabriel.
- „ 29. S. Eustathius of Mtskhetha.
- Aug. 3. S. Rajden.
- „ 28. S. Shushanika.
- Sept. 13. S. Ketevasia, queen.
- „ 15. S. Joseph of Alaverd.
- „ 16. S. Isaac and Joseph.
- „ 18. S. Birdzina and two brothers, Shalva and Elizbara.
- Oct. 1. Commemoration of the miracles wrought by our Saviour's coat.
- „ 2. S. David and Constantine.
- „ 5. S. Gregory of Chandzoi.
- „ 28. Neophyte, priest and martyr.
- Day to the martyr S. George.
- Nov. 10. S. Constantine, martyr.
- „ 17. S. Michael of Gobron.
- „ 19. S. Hilarion.
- „ 29. S. Aviv, Bishop of Necres.
- Dec. 2. S. Ise of Tsilkan.

Persians tended to weaken the faith in the distant parts of the mountain range of the Caucasus. Those mountaineers, having forgotten the unity of faith, invaded and laid waste Karthalinia ; but the king, at that time a mere youth, felt in himself sufficient strength to oppose the arrogance of man, and went forth to battle in faith and with courage. Armed in the name of the Cross of Christ, together with orthodox nations, and assured of a speedy victory by the prayers of Michael, he sallied forth and severely chastised the traitors. And, on the rupture of good understanding with the Greek emperors, he turned his arms against the Greeks, and succeeded in wresting from them the province of Clarjeth, which of yore was peopled by Iberians,

In addition to these feasts, the Georgian Church observes :—

1. The Thursday of Shrove-week, in honour of Shio of Mgvim.
2. The Tuesday in Holy Week, to the holy brethren of the desert of Davido-Garedj, put to death by Shah-Abbas.
3. The Wednesday of the seventh week after Easter, in honour of S. Dodo.
4. The Thursday of that same week, in honour of David of Garedj.

but which had for some time formed part of the Eastern Empire. Meanwhile, this withdrawal of the Caucasian tribes from under the Greek rule was not altogether favourable to the faith. Christianity, when first planted among them, was not nourished and maintained by duly appointed pastors; so that, from the first, it gradually grew weaker and weaker, until it perished altogether, by reason of the Georgians not always being able to maintain their own independence, much less to bring into subjection those wild mountain tribes. So that all that now remains of the light of Christianity once spread over those mountain fastnesses of the Caucasus are the ruins, here and there, of ancient churches, the name and memory of the prophet Elijah, the knowledge of the most Holy Trinity, and the keeping of certain fasts.²

² On the mountains of Ossetia, and in other mountain passes, are seen to this day the ruins of ancient churches. The thick forests and the rugged cliffs on the mountains of the Ap'hkhazes of Suanetia and of Ossetia are full of such relics of the Faith that once prevailed, for which the mountaineers of to-day still entertain a feeling of respect. The Ossetinians in general, show respect for the churches of the

III. The Iberian Church, having preserved entire dependence from the Patriarch of Antioch, received all the rites and ceremonies of the Greek Church, and carefully kept herself in union with her. As, for instance, on the occasion of the introduction of the Trisagion by Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople, in 433. So also on the first appearance of the Eutychian heresy, Peter Phyllon, *alias* Gnathius, not minding the synod of Chalcedon, constrained with imprecations the Church of Iberia to receive

Holy Archangel Michael in the pass of Trusov, of the B. V. Mary in Zakkhnisk, of S. George in Iamur, &c. They tell of the miracles which themselves witnessed, and keep the Christian festivals. Contracts or feuds between families at enmity with each other are usually terminated at the time of the Church festivals. They observe devoutly and rigorously the fast before Christmas, and the whole of Lent. They know the days of Palm Sunday, of Easter Day, of the Annunciation, of S. George, the name of the prophet Elijah, &c. The Aph'khazes who inhabit the shores of the Black Sea celebrate three days at Easter, and make use of painted eggs; the day of the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the 25th day of December as Christmas. The ruins of ancient churches are by them respected as places consecrated and set apart to God, and even as places of common resort, as of yore the tomb of Karthlos on the hills of Karthli was for the Georgians.

the Trisagion ; but this innovation was thrown out by the synod, and the Iberian Church stood by her former order. And, notwithstanding the falling away of some Armenians from union with the Eastern Church, and the increase of heterodox teachers — as, for instance, of Acephalites, of Severites, and of Phyllonists, and of other heretics all over Asia—the Iberians abstained from all change in rites and in ceremonies opposed to those of the orthodox Church.

IV. King Wakhtang, led by zeal for the Christian faith, and for orthodoxy, travelled with his family to Jerusalem, in order to worship at the sepulchre of our Lord. At or near the Holy City he built a convent, which for a long time remained in the hands of Georgians ; then he left there, for the protection of the holy places, a few Georgian soldiers, who thenceforward, and unto the present day, live around Jerusalem and on the Euphrates ; and he even forgot his own tongue in order to speak Arabic.

With the intention, also, of dividing Iberia into bishoprics, and of enlightening the nation by institutions in every one of their schools, Wakhtang

called to himself bishops and teachers from Greece ; but having once, in a fit of anger, been offended at his instructor, the Archbishop Michael, who opposed his will, he sent him to Constantinople for judgment. There Michael was shut up in a convent by the Patriarch Gennadius, who sent in his place to King Wakhtang the Archbishop Peter, with the title of Catholicos of all Iberia, and with the whole power of an independent ruler of the Church (*αὐτοκέφαλος*).³ Through the care of this new pastor the clergy was increased, priests were appointed in every town and village for the confirmation of the Gospel among the Ap'hkhazes and among the Mingrelians, inha-

³ Balsamon, on the Synod of Constantinople, R. II.—“Lata siquidem tempore sanctissimi patriarchæ magnæ Antiochiæ Petri synodali constitutione sancitum fuisse liberam esse ac principalem καὶ αὐτοκέφαλος ecclesiam Iberiæ, sed tamen Antiocheno patriarchæ subjectam.”—Codinus, in Notit. Græc. Episcopatum, p. 364, writes :—“Quartus Sanctissimus et Apostolicus thronus Anthiochæ et Patriarchicus—complectens versus ortum solis iter lxxxvi dierum—versus Iberiam et Abasgiam—Persas, Medos—comprehendit Iberiam, quam honoravit Anthiochenæ Synodi dijudicatio, cum illi antea fuit subjecta : horum enim Antistites a propriis Episcopis ordinati solebant.”—Matthei Mon. sive Blastaris Syntagma Alphabet. lit. E.

bitants of the northern and of the eastern slopes of the Caucasus; by his order were ecclesiastical works that had been mutilated through copying collated afresh, and others translated from the Greek, and added to those already belonging to the Church; schools were founded in connection with the Church; and in the place of the old temple, built by Mirian in Mtskhetha, a new one of stone was erected, of a large size, and surrounded by high stone walls; and twelve bishoprics were established in Kartalinia, twelve in Kakheti, nine in Samkheti, and two in Imereth.

V. We do not, at present, know exactly what was that Eparchy. Episcopus, who wrote in the last century, gives the following order of this hierarchy:—

1. Catholicos of Mtskhetha^b 1. Catholicos of Ap'hkhazeth.^c
and of all Georgia.
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^b Mtskhetha, between the Aragvi and the Kur, ancient capital of Georgia, before Tiflis became the seat of government; see above, chap. i. p. 140.

^c Ap'hkhazeth, one of the districts of Imereth, also called *Egris*; whence *Meegreli*, *Mingrelia*.

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| 2. Archbishop of Somkheth. ^d | 2. Archbishop of Djqon-Did. ^g |
| 3. Archbishop of Mtzkhetha. | 3. Archbishop of Alaverd. ^h |
| 4. Bishop of Matskur. ^e | 4. Archbishop of Bodbé. ⁱ |
| 5. Bishop of Kumurdo. ^f | 5. Bishop of Ninotsminda. ^k |

^d Somkhethi is a district of South Karthli, situated between the rivers Debeda and Kezia.

^e I can find no mention of Matskur anywhere.—[Transl.]

^f The church of Cumurdo, built by the messengers of Constantine to King Mirian, is situated in Djawakhethi, between the Djawakhethis-Mtcwari and the small lake into which falls the river Phoso. It was the seat of the Bishop of Djawakheth, above Kherthwis.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 98.

^g Dchqon-Did, or Great Dchqond, on the river Tchenistsqali, with the church of Martwira, was built by Georgi, VIIIth king of Imereth, who made it a bishopric.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 394.

^h Alaverd, Alawerd, and Alaberd, is the name of a large church and monastery on the river Alan, in Sakheth. It was built by Ioseb or Joseph, one of the thirteen Fathers, who made it a convent. It was made a bishopric, and destroyed by an earthquake, and then rebuilt by King Rostom and by Archil.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 318.

ⁱ Bodbé, as we have already seen, is the church and convent in Sakheth where S. Nina lived, died, and is now buried.

^k Nino-Tsminda, or S. Nina, church, monastery, and bishopric in the Gareth-Sakheth.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 480.

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| 6. Bishop of Ishkhan. ¹ | 6. Bishop of Antshi. ² |
| 7. Bishop of Mtbevel. | 7. Bishop of Tsartskuma. ³ |
| 8. Bishop of Tskaros-Tav. ⁴ | 8. Bishop of Erushathi. ⁵ |
| 9. Bishop of Gangi. | 9. Bishop of Tsin-tsqaro. ⁶ |
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¹ Ishkhan was a strong city of Clarjeth on the Ishkhan-tsqali (river of Ishkhan), and near the Djorokh. There resided, near a large and beautiful church, the Bishop of Ispira, of Thorthom, of Baiburd, and of the hilly country as far as Trebizond.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 114.

² Tsqaros-thaw is a church built by Mirdat, on the river Phoso, in Djawakheth, and made the residence of the bishop of that part of the country.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 98.

³ Antchis, or Antchis-khat, is the name of a large and beautiful church, the seat of the Catholicos, at Tiflis. It was restored by the Catholicos Domenti, son of Kaikhosro.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 188.

⁴ Tsurtsquma, a town of the Samtzkhé, with a large church, once the residence of a bishop.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 88.

⁵ The Erushathi is a district of the Samtzkhé, between the Erushethis-mtha and the Arsianis-mtha. At Nakalakew is a beautiful church built by an ambassador of Constantine at the emperor's expense. In it was a nail of our Saviour's cross deposited; and it became afterwards the residence of the Bishop of Erushethi.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 104.

⁶ There is a small town called Tsin-tsqaro near the river Algeth, in Karthli, between the Ktzia and the Kur or Mtcwar; but it is not said to have been a bishopric.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 174.

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| 10. Bishop of Rustav. ^r | 10. Bishop of Urbnis. [▪] |
| 11. Bishop of Katsari. | 11. Bishop of Samthawis. [†] |
| 12. Bishop of Mrovel. | 12. Bishop of Bolnis. ^u |
| 13. Bishop of Nikozi. | 13. Bishop of Anio. |
| 14. Bishop of Valasgird. | 14. Bishop of Tiflis. ^z |

^r Rusthaw, now Boston-kalab, or Nageb, a fortified city of Karthli, was first built by Karthlos's queen. Afterwards Tiridat, XXVIIIth king, built therein a handsome church, and Wakhtang Gorhaslan made it an episcopal residence.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 180.

[▪] Urbnis, in Karthli, was built, as we have already seen, by Uphlos, son of Karthlos. It became the residence of the bishop of the lands watered by the great Liakhwi.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 258.

[†] Samthawis, church built by Isidoré, one of the thirteen Fathers, who is buried in it. It is situated to the east of the river Rekhula, and is the residence of the bishop of the vale of the Ksant of the Rekhula.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 242.

^u Bolnis, small town of Karthli, on the banks of the Pholadur, with a church built by P'harsman, XXIXth king of Georgia, and made a bishopric by Wakhtang Gorhaslan. The Bishop of Bolnis has the charge of the Karthli Somkethi, or Georgian Armenia.—Wakh. Gheoghr. pp. 144, 145.

^z Tiflis, or rather Tp'hilis, on the Mtcwari, or Kur, was built by Wakhtang Gorhaslan, and made a royal residence by Datchi, XXXIVth king of Georgia. It consists of three towns, Tiflis, Cala, and Isni, or Nisani, separated from each other by the Kur, and by other streams. It contains several fine churches, such as S. George, the Holy Trinity, the

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| 15. Bishop of Krel. | 15. Bishop of Tsalka.* |
| 16. Bishop of Khardshasho.† | 16. Bishop of Dmani. |
| 17. Bishop of Bana.* | 17. Bishop of Gishel. |
| 18. Bishop of Tsherminsk. | |
| 19. Bishop of Daban.‡ | |

Transfiguration, the Raising of the Cross, &c., and is the seat of a Catholicos, and of an archimandrite. For further particulars, see Wakhushht Gheoghr. pp. 184 and 185 of transl. *et seq.*

† The church of Khardshasho, on the White Aragwi, in Northern Sakhetli, was the seat of a bishop of the surrounding district.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 294.

* Bana or Phanac, a town of Samtskhé, and once a bishopric.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 118. Now in ruins.

‡ Tsalca, town and bishopric on the banks of the Ktzia, in Karthli. There resides the Bishop of Trialeti.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 160.

§ King Wakhtang could not institute more than two bishops in Imereth, because it was then under Greek rule, and the Greek patriarchs provided with bishops the parts which they colonized in Colchis and on the shores of the Black Sea. The two Eparchies set on foot by Wakhtang in Imereth were probably in the districts now called Ratchni and the land of the Likhi—mountainous parts of Imereth, bounded by Karthalinia, and never under the Greek emperors; for in these places there is not even a trace left of either the Roman or of the Greek rule. At the end of the ixth and at the beginning of the xth century, when the Greek influence ceased altogether both in Colchis, and the kings of Georgia

came into possession of all the remnants of Greek civilization, then, instead of the Eparchies established by the Greeks—viz., *Rhodopolis* (now Vartsikha), *Petra* (Utchinara, a fortified city of the Emperor Justinian, built in 530), *Phasida* (now *Pota*), and *Zigane* (a fortified city, probably in Kobyleta, now belonging to Turkey)—the following Eparchies appear to have been founded :—

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| 1. Dandar. | 8. Ippuria. | 15. Djakvi. |
| 2. Mokvi. | 9. Khopi. | 16. Khoni. |
| 3. Belia. | 10. Sevastopol. | 17. Nikortsinda. |
| 4. Tchaishi. | 11. Anaklia. | 18. Genati. |
| 5. Tcheleshi. | 12. Tsageri. | 19. Kutais, &c. |
| 6. Martvili. | 13. Shemokmedi. | |
| 7. Tkvatchi. | 14. Djamadi. | |

Basilius, Bishop of the Caucasus, was present at the Synod of Constantinople, summoned by the Emperor Andronicus Paleologus, A.D. 1282—1328. Oriens Christ. tom. i. p. 1325, protesting against the book of Dositheus, Patriarch of Jerusalem ; De Patriarch. Hierosolym. lib. xii. cap. 11, par. 10. It is not known at present where was the seat of the Bishop of the Caucasus.

All these Eparchies existed until the beginning of the xviiith century. Thirty-three bishoprics thus existing in Karthalinia, Kakhet, and Samkhet can alone account for the faith of martyrs and confessors triumphing over the untold vicissitudes of those times, and outliving the incursions of the Turks and of the Persians ; and, worse still, the scandal created by the kings of Georgia, willingly or unwillingly, turning Mahomedans and opposing Christianity for two hundred years in the course of the xvth and xvith centuries.

These bishoprics, established in the vaivods or palatinats of Georgia, were dependent on the Catholics, who took the title of Catholicos of Mtskhetha and of Iberia. The Catholicos governed the acts of the Church without having to give account to any of the four patriarchs; at all events, history is silent as to whether or not the Greek patriarchs exercised any influence over the doings of the Church of Georgia after the days of P'harsman III., who severed her from under Greek authority about A.D. 556. But, in consequence of this separation from the rule of the Greek patriarchate, and of this independence as a Catholicate, which was not only complete, but, so write historians, was wrought out with the consent of Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople, and of the Emperor Justinian, an inevitable estrangement and other inconveniences happened in this Church thus cut off from Constantinople and from Antioch, and divided by the jealousies of nations at enmity with one another. Yet, on the other hand,

On the other hand, the kings of Imereth never changed their faith, however much oppressed they might be by the Turks.

we find that on several important occasions the Catholicos of Iberia often referred to the patriarchs of the Greek Church, and submitted to the judgment of the Œcumenic Church all that which for good government required the sanction of the synod.

CHAPTER IV.

Arrival in Iberia of thirteen Fathers from Syria—Places where they fixed their abode—Conversion of the Lazes to the Gospel—Building of a Church in Bitshvinta (Pitiunta) by the Greeks—Conversion of the Ap'hkhazes to the Gospel.



THE reign of P'harsman (A.D. 541-555), writes Wakhusht,¹ was remarkable by the arrival in Iberia of thirteen champions of the Faith from Syria. Even the Iberians themselves were obliged to admit the mysterious call from Heaven to those men to come into Iberia,

¹ The arrival of the thirteen Fathers from Syria into Georgia is, not without good reason, placed in the year 445. But I follow the chronology of Wakhusht in my narrative of that event.

when these defenders of the Faith, thus miraculously brought, entered Mtskhetha after having crossed the river dry-shod, and when they began to preach peace and the word of God in the Iberian tongue, to the astonishment of the wondering people, of the king, and of the Catholicos Eulabius himself. Georgian historians have preserved the names of all these men, and the lives of some of them. They were: (1) Ioané, or John, the chief, and teacher of all the others; (2) Abib, Aviv, or Abibos; (3) Antoni; (4) Dawith; (5) Zenon; (6) Thathé, or Thaddæus; (7) Ise, or Jesse; (8) Ioseb, or Joseph; (9) Isidore; (10) Michael; (11) Piros; (12) Stephanes; (13) Shio; and (14) the Deacon Elias, constant fellow-traveller of John. These men, sent to the Eparchs with directions from the king and from the Catholicos, chose for their residence places suited to the preaching of the Gospel, and to the teaching of the people, thus:—

1. *Ioané*, or *John*, the oldest of them all, settled on the rugged hill of Zedadzen,^a covered with thick

^a Zedadzen is the name of a mountain of Sakhethi to the east of Mtskhetha, on which *meothkhe mep'he-man P'harnad-*

forests, not far from the town of Mtzkhetha. After pulling down the remains of heathen temples at that place, that champion of the Faith shed forth from his narrow cell the gifts of God's blessing on the people that came to him. His sainted life and miracles are still commemorated by the Georgian Church on the 7th of May. After his death a church was built in his name on that same spot, the ruins of which subsist to this day.

2. *Aviv*, or *Abibos of Necres*, who, at the request of the Catholicos and of the king, accepted the office of Bishop and the Chair of Necres,^b reduced

jom aghashena tzikhé, da aghmartha mun kerpi Zadeni, da amitha etsoda mthasa amas Zeda-Zadeni, the IVth king, P'harnadjom, built a citadel, and also set up the idol Zaden, whence the mountain was called Zeda-Zaden (*i.e.*, on which is Zaden). Later, Ioané, one of the thirteen Fathers, built there a convent and a church. The water which trickles from the roof of it is said to cure diseases. (Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 300.) The Karthl. Tskhovr. does not give so many details, but simply says that P'harnadjom built several cities, *da aman aghashena tzikhe Zadeni da shekmna kerpi sakhelith Zaden*, and he built the citadel of Zaden, and made the idol called Zaden.—Karthl. Tskhovr. vol. i. pp. 34 and 152, *et seq.*

^b Necresi, in Sakthethi, was built by P'harnadjom. Tiridat built there a church, where resided S. Abib, one of the thirteen

the number of fire-worshippers through the conversion of many of them to the light of the Gospel, and brought back to the Faith the inhabitants of the Caucasus, and those of that region who had fallen back from Christianity to heathenism.

But, by the sleight of the chief of the fire-worshippers, Aviv was seized, stoned to death, and his body cast for food to wild beasts and to birds of prey, near the village of Rekha,^e about thirty versts from the city of Goria.^d The remains of that holy martyr, which were at first buried nigh unto the place of his martyrdom, were afterwards taken up by the ruling prince Stephen, son of King Adarnas, and then laid, with great pomp and ceremony, in the cathedral of Mtzkhetha, where they are yet devoutly worshipped. The feast of that martyr is

Fathers, who became Bishop of Ghoghma-Mkari and of the Didoethi. He was put to death by the Persians, and is buried at Samthawro.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 314, and Karthlis Tskhovr. p. 151.

^e Rekha is a small town in Middle Karthli, north of the Kur. From it the river Rekhula receives its name.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 242.

^d Gori, to the east of Up'hlis-Tzikhé, so called from a high mountain (Gōra) in the neighbourhood.—Wakh. p. 244.

held by the Church of Georgia on the 9th of November.

3. *Antoni*, or *Antonius*, settled on the wooded hills of Martqop'h,* and from that solitude he got the name of *Martqop'h the Hermit*. After living a long time unknown, he was, at last, discovered by stag-hunters on those mountains, subsisting on doe's milk and seated on a pillar, struggling with life. A church was afterwards built on that spot, and, in place of the pillar, they set up on that hill, to the memory of the saint, another pillar which is now in ruins. The Georgian Church keeps in memory of Antoni the 19th of January and the 16th of August. These feasts are celebrated with great pomp and solemnity; they bring together even Armenians

* Martqop'h, between the range of Lito and of Sakheth, in Sakhethi. There is the large church of Ghwthaeba, where S. Antoni dwelt. His whole life was spent in a cave in the neighbourhood. He called the place *Marto-mqop'hi* (living alone), and hence the whole solitude was called Martqop'h. Later, Rusthaw having been destroyed, the bishop thereof came to reside at Ghwthaeba, with the title of Rasthaweli, without interfering with the Bishop of Martqop'h. The life of S. Antoni is told at length in Karthlis Tskhovr. vol. i. p. 156, *et seq.*—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 302, *et seq.*

and other heterodox Christians. Until the year 1760 the hill of Martqop'h was inhabited by hermits, who were then driven away by the incursions of the Lezghians.

4. *Dawith*, or *David*, was the founder of the hermitage of Garedj,[†] thus named from his solitary life,[‡] and renowned, until 1780, for the number of

[†] Garedj, or Garedjio-mtha, is a range of mountains that separate the Karthli from the Sakhethi, to the east of the Kur. The whole district was inhabited by monks living either in caves or in monasteries, several of which are still celebrated—such as Nathlis-mtzelmel (S. John the Baptist), Tchitchikour, Dawith-Garedja, &c. It has also several fine churches and ancient paintings. That residence for hermits was founded by Dawith, one of the thirteen Fathers.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 180, *et seq.*, and Karthlis Tskhovr. p. 152, *et seq.*

[‡] Persian magi, or priests of fire-worship, were then in Georgia, and had their temples until Iberia embraced Christianity, as also in the part of Cappadocia adjoining Iberia, according to Basilius, ambassador to Epiphanius in 325. One of these fire-temples, laid in ruins by time and by the hand of destruction which nearly laid waste Tiflis, is yet to be seen in that city.

[§] From the Georgian expression *gare sđja*, that means, to sit or reside apart.—Wakhusht. [But better, from *gare djdōma*.—Transl.]

hermits, of grottoes hewn in the solid rock by the hands of monks, and for the number as well as for the riches of its churches. That solitude was celebrated for many a worker of miracles, among whom we remark especially Lucian and Dodo, disciples of S. David. The feast of this saint is kept on the Thursday of the seventh week after Easter.

5. *Ise*, or *Jesse*, was ordained Bishop of Tsilcan against his will, but at the request of King P'harsman III. They quote, as an instance of his power to work miracles, the bringing of water from the river Ksani over the fields of Tsilcan^s by the waving of his crozier. This saint, renowned for his miracles, and for his sanctity, ended his life peaceably in Tsilcan. The Church of Georgia celebrates his feast on the 2nd of December.

6. *Joseph*, after having preached the faith of Christ to the inhabitants of Eastern Kakheth, sowed further into the mountains the seeds of the Gospel, which, however, were soon smothered among the rough mountaineers. Unable to endure

^s For S. Ise of Tsilcan see above, chap. ii. note (*), and also Karthlis Tskhovreba, p. 156.

certain traces of superstition and of heathenism, this holy man pleaded with the Catholicos and with the king for a greater number of churches, and for greater zeal in maintaining the faith undefiled. His feast is kept on the 14th of September; and his relics rest in the large temple of Alawerd,^h the most spacious of all churches in Georgia, built during his lifetime, and dedicated to the confessor and martyr S. George.⁴

7. *Shio*, surnamed *the Anchorite*, by reason of the manner and of the place in which he lived, was renowned for his miracles and for his deep humility. While living in a cavern hewn in the rock by himself, he was fed by a dove which brought him food in his retreat. This led the great Evagrius to betake himself to that solitude and to ask Shio to admit him into it. Evagrius being thus received, built, at the request of the saint, a church dedicated to the B. V. Mary, and built a hermitage, which

^h For Alawerd, see above, chap. ii. note (m), and for further details respecting Ioseb, or Joseph, Karthlis Tskhovr. p. 151, and Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 318, 319, *et seq.*

⁴ Now called the Cathedral of the Exaltation of the Cross of Alawerd, and found in Kakheth.

often contained a great number of hermits. The bones of Shio, which of their own accord moved forward from the bottom of the cavern in which they lay, and in which he had lived and struggled, were long shown to believers; and this miracle is to this day commemorated by the Church. At the time of the irruption of the Persians into Iberia, under Shah Abbas, these bones were taken out of their place, and carried away into Persia. But, when, in consequence of this, the Persians were routed by the terror caused through divers apparitions, and reduced by a fearful epidemic that preyed on them for some time, they then brought back the remains of the saint into Georgia⁵ with great pomp and with

⁵ It is very remarkable that the Persians, who looked upon the land of Georgia as superstitious and infidel (*giaour*), yet entertained such respect for the holy temples and for the images that, when they invaded the country, they were afraid to touch the consecrated goods and chattels belonging to the churches, and did not begin to plunder them until ordered so to do by him who ruled over them, and who set them the example. The images of certain churches were then especially, and are even at present, looked upon with awe by the Mahomedans, as mighty patrons and protectors of the

Georgians. Afterwards, and especially during the xvth, xviith, and xviiiith centuries, when the incursions of the Persians were most oppressive for Georgia, many miracles were seen that so terrified the enemy as to lead numbers of them to embrace Christianity. Some of the Persian Shahs gave proof of it by adorning images in churches with silver and gold, and by making offerings of money and of precious wares. Indeed, the great Shah Abbas offered the hilt of his sword, adorned with precious stones, to the image of S. Eustathius, in Karthalinia. Many Persians at the present day either pray to or, at least, entertain the greatest respect for the images of the saints celebrated for their miracles in the Church of Iberia. Georgians who were driven by Shah Abbas to emigrate into Khorassan (I. A. Guldenstädt's *Reisen nach Georgien und Imerethi*, Theil i. pp. 243 and 327, S. P. B. ed. 1787), to the number of a hundred thousand, and who still continue Mahomedans, have among them an image of S. Antoni, a Georgian saint; and they do him homage on a mountain still called Martkop, from the village of Martkop, where they first lived, in Georgia. Images of Gurdjistan, that is, images of Georgian saints, have long been proverbial among them. Shah Abbas II. forbade, by an edict, the persecution of Christians in Persia, and granted tolerance of faith not only to Greeks, but also to Catholics, Armenians, Nestorians, and to Christians of other professions. His example was followed by his successor Sephi Mirza, or Shah Solyman, and Shah Husseyn, to whom Pope Innocent XII. wrote, in 1694, a flattering letter of thanks for his favour and protection to the missionaries, who were then remarkably successful in Persia.—*Theatr. Europ.* t. iv.; *Bull. Cann.* t. iii. p. 620; *Enchirid. Chron. Carmel.* p. 416; *Fleury, Hist. Eccles.* lib. ccxi. § lxvi.

presents. This miracle is commemorated on the Thursday after Shrove Sunday.¹

As to the other seven Syrian saints, the particulars of their lives were lost during the invasions of the Persians and of the Turks into Georgia. Hymns of thanksgiving in honour of them, composed by Arsèn, Nicolas, Antoni I., Kissarion, and Macrina, sister of King Theimuraz I., are sung even to this day in the churches of Georgia. And the spots where their remains were found are marked by temples built thereon, which subsist at present. Thus the name of Zenon is religiously honoured in Iqalto,¹ that of Thaddeus in Stephantsminda,² that of Isidore in Samthawis,¹ that of

¹ The life of S. Shio is also told in *Karthlis Tskhovreba*, p. 154, whence this account is partly borrowed.

² Iqaltho is the name of a river of Sakhethi, and of a handsome monastery built by Zenon, who is buried there.—*Wakh. Gheoghr.* p. 318, and map 4, east of Sakhethis-mtha.

² Step'han-Tsminda, monastery built by S. Thadhe, one of the thirteen Fathers, is situated above Caspis, near Mameba, on the western side of the river Rekhula.—*Wakh. Gheoghr.* pp. 240, 242.

¹ Samthawis, church and monastery built by S. Isidore, one of the thirteen Fathers, is situated on the eastern bank

Michael in Ulumba,^m that of Piros in Brethi,ⁿ that of Stephen in Khirsa.^o Besides special days set apart in honour of some of them, the general feast of them all is kept on the 7th of May.

II. The Iberian Church, from which the Ap'hk-hazes, the Lazes, and the inhabitants of Colchis that dwell on the shores of the Black Sea fell away in the reign of P'harsman III., received them back by the help of Zath, king of the Lazes, who had shaken off the Persian yoke, together with the Iberians, and had renounced heathenism. These tribes had severed themselves, living apart from Iberia, and, being governed by men from among themselves,

of the Rekhula, a little above Step'han-Tsminda.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 242.

^m Ulumba, monastery built by S. Michael, lies at the foot of the Likhis-mtha, near the source of the river Alis, in Karthli, on the borders of Imerethi.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 266, and id. map 3.

ⁿ Brethi, monastery built by S. Piros, lies to the west of Urnis, and near the river Dwanis.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 260, and id. map 4, west of Ruis.

^o Khirsa, monastery founded by S. Step'hane, is situated between Bodbé, in Sakthethi, and the river Alasan; S. Step'hane is buried there.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 310, and id. map 4.

declared Zath king, and made use of the crown, of the purple, and of the baptism of the Emperor Justinus in order to confirm Zath in his title of king. Soon after a church was built in the town of Bitshvinta⁶ (Pitiunta,), which Vakar, successor of P'harsman, adorned and enriched with ecclesiastical furniture, while the Catholicos provided priests and a clergy for the service thereof.

III. In order to strengthen the union with the united Greeks, the king of Iberia repaired with the whole of his family to Constantinople in 597, to the Greek emperor, to give him a proof of his friendship, and thus to establish on a firm footing in Iberia an unalterable unity in faith, and a good understanding between the two nations, with one and the same creed in common.

Greek historians allude to this circumstance, and tell us that in the days of the Emperor Justinian the Ap'hkhazes returned to the Christian faith; and

⁶ See, for a description of that church, which has remained uninjured up to the present time, *Voyage autour du Caucase*, par Frédéric Du Bois de Montpéreux, tom. i. pp. 221—233; Chardin, i. 49; Reineggs, *Allgemeine Historische u. Topogr. Beschreibung des Caucasus*, ii. 3.

they single out, as a proof thereof, the Ap'hkhaze officer Euphrate, who stood at the gate of the Greek emperor. With the assistance of the Greeks, this attendant on the king spread afresh the Christian faith among his own people, softened their savage habits, and rooted out from among them inhuman customs. And the same writers⁷ tell us that Justinian built for them a beautiful temple, dedicated to the B. V. Mary, and that he gave them priests provided with everything necessary for Divine service, and for all other religious ceremonies.

⁷ Cedren, p. 293; Theophr. Chronogr. pp. 145—146; Procop. de Bello Persico, lib. ii.; Agathiæ Scholasti. lib. ii and iii. So also write Zonaras and Paulus Diaconus, in Hist. Justin. Senior. lib. xv., Chronicon paschale in the reign of Justinus IV. This patron image of the B. V. Mary is now to be found in the monastery of Gaenat, at seven versts from Kitais.

Procopius writes that Justinian restored also an ancient Christian temple in Lazetia, which had fallen into decay (Procop. de Edif. Just. lib. iii. cap. 7). That temple, restored by Justinian, and still in good preservation, may be seen among the ruins of the ancient town of the Argonauts, called Ea, or Archeopolis. The ruins of that town are called Nakalakesa by the Mingrelians.

CHAPTER V.

Persecution of the Church on the part of the Persians—
Troubles of the Church from Albanian heretics—
Arrival in Georgia of Murwan the Deaf—Divers proofs
of God's protection over the Christians of Iberia—Arme-
nian heretics in Georgia—War with the Greeks—A
separate Catholicos in Ap'hkhazia and in Imereth—Geor-
gian children are sent to Greece for their education.



UNFORTUNATELY, the persecutions carried on against the Christian Church in Georgia did not grow less. After that Izdegerd and Varan had put to death 160,000 Christians in the East, a most cruel persecution against the Church of Iberia was set on foot by the wily and warlike king of Persia, Kabad (A.D. 321). This man, under pretence of the rights

formerly granted to fire-worshippers, and himself wishing to revive that worship, put the king of Iberia to great straits; so that, now by threats, and then by promises of mercy, he so managed that the Christian sovereign brought back Iberia to the worship of fire and to Persian rites.¹

II. The king of Iberia, Gurgin, begged the Greek emperor to send him help; but the emperor, occupied at home, and hampered on his eastern frontiers by the generals of Kabad, only sent to the Iberians Probus Patricius, who, however, coming to the rescue of a Church so threatened without sufficient number of troops, could afford no assistance whatever. Then the king of Georgia, seeing his own efforts unavailing and his resistance hopeless, was driven to hide himself with his family among the mountain passes of the Lazes, after

¹ This is what Kabadius did: "Eos (Iberians) cum ad religionis suæ instituta vellet adigere, ipsorum regi mandavit, ut cum cæteros Persarum ritus amplecteretur, tum in primis ne mortuos tumularet, sed in prædam avibus canibusque projiceret."—Procop. de Bello Pers. lib. i. cap. 12; Evagrii Schol. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 22; Nic. Call. Hist. xvii. cap. 13; Procop. de Bell. Goth. lib. iv. cap. 3.

having abandoned everything to the fate of war. Yet the Church of God in Iberia, planted with the Cross of Christ, was not only not destroyed in the midst of all these troubles, but was even strengthened. Kabad, suddenly called back to the rescue of his own kingdom, returned to Persia, leaving Iberia, it is true, in a state of desolation, but withal strengthened within herself by unity of the Faith. And we may quote Procopius² to show that, as to the spirit of the Christians of Iberia in those days, they were, of all Christians, the best and the most earnest in their defence of the rules of faith, and of the rites and ceremonies of the orthodox Church.

Meanwhile, as the persecution ceased and quiet reigned without, so also did divisions and dissensions increase within ; and the Church, which had just enjoyed a short respite and peace, was again subject to fresh disturbances from heretics called

² Here is a proof of the zeal of Georgians for the Faith :
"Christiani sunt inter omnes, quos eo nomine censuri scimus, sacrarum legum at cæremoniarum tenacissimi, quamvis regi Persarum jam inde antiquitus subditi fuerint."—Procop. de Bell. Pers. lib. i. cap. 12.

Albanians³ for having first appeared in Albania, a district to the south-west of Georgia, in the year 650. The doctrine they preached was, in many respects, like that of the Manichæans and of other Syrian heretics. However, watchful pastors girded against them the sword of the Word of God, as kings did the whole of their strength ; so that, at the outset, the nation felt confidence in resisting these teachers of strange doctrine, and thus stayed the further progress thereof among orthodox Christians.

III. About this time Georgia was exposed to the invasion of Murwan Abul Kazim, the last khalif of the Omniads (A.D. 730). The Christian Faith, however, in this case, not only deprived of many

³ The doctrine of the Albanese consisted in this :— There are two principles, one good, the Father of Jesus Christ, who is the author of the New Testament ; the other evil, the author of the Old Testament : the world is eternal : the Son of God brought a body from heaven : all sacraments, except baptism, are obsolete and useless : hell is a fable, &c. (Gautier, dans sa Chronique ; and Diction. Théolog. par l'Abbé Bergier—sub voce *Albanois*.) Still, in the xth century, Albania had an independent Bishop, with the title of Catholicos.—Constantin. de Cerimon. Aul. Byz. tom. ii. p. 387.

advantages the Persian magi, who were obliged to close their fire-temples in Georgia, but it also opposed a barrier to the inroads of Islamism. Murwan, having drawn his troops to the borders of Georgia, rushed into Imereth, where, after having exterminated both Christians and Christianity, he demolished temples and gave whole towns and villages to fire and to the sword. The Persian barbarians revelled in the despair and in the lamentations of the people; they defiled the sanctuaries, offered violence to religious women, slew the priests and sprinkled their blood on their altars. It was during this time of woeful tribulation for the Church of Iberia that the two brothers Dawith and Costantine,^a powerful princes

^a The martyrdom of S. Dawith and of S. Costantine, celebrated in the Georgian Church, is thus told in the Synaxarion for the 31st of October:—

“Relation of the holy and invincible martyrs Dawith and Costantine. These invincible martyrs were native Georgians, from the borders of Ap'hkhazeth, and from the neighbourhood of Argweth, and by birth aznaour (*i.e.*, nobles) on their father's and on their mother's side; valiant soldiers, and invincible in battle, well favoured, and renowned for their glorious deeds,

“Truly the holy and invincible martyr Dawith was, in appearance, thus : in body, perfect and vigorous ; neither too tall nor too short ; full of grace, and accomplished in every good gift and meekness. He was, then, of a handsome countenance, with dark eyes and a brown beard, of a fair complexion, and a nose slightly arched ; strong and full of faith, with the ornament of a good conduct ; and about thirty-eight years of age.

“But S. Costantine was in person handsome, with dark reddish eyes, brown, glossy, and curly hair ; energetic in speech, and quick in his answers ; fair and upright in his address, and girt with temperance and sobriety ; about seventeen years old ; careful to fast, and never given to anger towards those with whom he had to do. Both were entirely strangers to evil-speaking, lying, and swearing ; both were examples of life to hermits living in solitudes. They were each a table for the hungry and the destitute, and both friends of orphans. In short, they were perfect in all virtues.

“Their martyrdom happened when, in order to try our nation, the sword of the Persians was sent against us ; when, in order to punish us for our sins and iniquities, came Murwan Abu’lkazim the Deaf (Murwan Qru), nephew of the abominable impostor Mahomed, who deceived the whole country of the Saracens, and triumphed by his deceitful language. This martyrdom then took place, in the year of the world 6223, and in the 777th of our Saviour’s crucifixion.

“When that impious man received the mission to lay waste our country, as well as other nations, a gathering of about a thousand three hundred and thirty men took place, at the head of which were Dawith and Costantine, who exhorted them not to deny Christ. At eventide did the vanguard of

of Argweth,^b suffered martyrdom for their courageous confession of Christ. Their bodies, which

the Persian army of nine thousand fall upon them ; and a hot fight lasted until the cock-crowing, when a thousand two hundred and thirty men had fallen by the sword of the Persians. The rest, overpowered, fled, but afterwards were again attacked and put to death as victims for Christ, while a few remained hidden in the woods. Meanwhile Dawith and Costantine were taken and brought before the tyrant, in whose presence they boldly confessed Christ ; wherefore they were beaten by strong men—for they spake openly of the mysterious power of Christ—and were at last condemned to perish in the river Rion, for having thought scorn of the wishes and of the promises of their persecutors.

“Those sainted men received this sentence with joy ; they then begged they might be buried when dead, and prayed to God that those who should touch them, and those who should call upon them by name, should be cured of their diseases. After this, certain faithful men saw a divine light shining over them. They took up their bodies and laid them in the chancel of the church, under ground. The place is called Uthmini ; and there innumerable cures take place, to the glory of God and of his saints. Amen.”

This account, taken from the Georgian original, published by M. Brosset at the end of his *Grammaire de la Langue Georgienne*, Paris, 1837, is by him said to be the only original article in the Georgian Synaxarion—that is, the only article that is not a translation from the Greek Menologion.

^b Argweth, a district of Imereth on the river Qwirila.

had been thrown into the river, were afterwards found lying face to face on the bank, and were laid by pious Christians in a wooden coffin in the convent of Motsameth. Even at present their relics cease not to work wonderful cures on those who piously worship them; and the Church commemorates their death on the 2nd of October.⁴ Indeed, many that are not Christians, but that are still in heathenism, come to do homage to those sainted relics, as if in token of the influence Christianity once had on the inhabitants of those countries.

The war waged by the Persians on the occasion of the spreading of the Christian Faith among the Lazes and among the Ap'hkhazes again cost Georgia the life of many of her sons. The hordes of Persia grievously oppressed and afflicted Iberia, in spite of the troops sent by the Greeks to her assistance. That was a trying time for the Church; but God,

⁴ See, on this subject, the Synaxarion of the Georgian Church for the 31st of October, and the Hist. of Georgia; also, *Eléments de la Langue Georgienne*, par Brosset jeune, 278—283.

who never leaves His own without deliverance, bade them remain quiet in His hands, while He subjected the barbarians themselves to sundry defeats and to severe losses, such as the rout caused by the extraordinary terror of Masalma,⁵ general of the Khozars, at the Caspian gates; a violent earthquake felt by the Persians while preparing to fall across Georgia upon the Khozars; the irruption of these same Khozars into the northern parts of Persia, where they took rich spoils and made many prisoners and captives;⁶ and, lastly, one of the most severe winters ever known in that part of Asia, and, in consequence of it, a great famine and the pestilence that followed.⁷

IV. The truth of the Christian Faith was then proved by the martyrdom of many Christians; among others, we notice that of Shushanika⁸ (Susanna),

⁵ Theoph. Chronogr. pp. 273—279; Venice ed. makes mention of this.

⁶ Ibid. p. 290.

⁷ Ibid. p. 291 : Anast. Biblioth. p. 78.

⁸ The Armenian Church places, not without reason, her martyrdom in the 7th century (Hist. of Tchamtschian, tom. i. p. 518, ch. ii. pp. 86, 87; and Hist. of Lazarus Parbius, pp.

wife of the governor of Rham. At first she seemed inclined to relapse, owing to the efforts of certain Armenian⁹ emigrants, who, availing themselves of the

93, 191, 195, both in Armenian), and calls her the daughter of the Armenian general Bardan. She is feasted on the 25th of December (Martyrol. Arménien, Venise, 25 Dec. tom. iv. p. 63). Her relics are laid in the temple of Metekh, in Tiflis, the first and oldest of Christian temples in the city of Tiflis.

⁹ The Armenians, who were converted to Christianity almost at the same time as the Georgians, by S. Gregory the Illuminator, were in close union with the East until the Council of Chalcedon. Christianity did then flourish among them ; but, from the year 535, the greater portion of the Armenian Church fell aside from the Greek, by rejecting the Ecumenic Council of Chalcedon. Even until the Council of Florence, Dominicans sent into Armenia by Pope John XXII. tried to persuade the Armenians to join the Western Church ; but such proposals of union were never once renewed, and were without results, especially after the Council of Florence, during the papacy of Eugenius IV. For a detailed account of this see (1) Nicon Tractat. de Arm. Religione, in Bibl. Patr. tom. iii. ; (2) Crusius, Germano-Græcia ; (3) Beveridge, in Trulan. Canon. 56 ; (4) Euthymius Zigabenus, Panoplia, part ii ; (5) Simon Hist. Predic. du Levant ; (6) Spanh. sæc. v. cap. vii. p. 1004, &c. In the History of Armenia by Tchamtschian, vol. ii. p. 301-307, are details given relative to the falling away of the Armenian Church from the Greek. And comparisons

protection of the Emperor Mauricius, endeavoured to spread in Georgia the doctrine of the Monophysites, a doctrine by means of which Mauricius wished to reconcile the Greeks, who had cut off the Syrians from union with them ; but Kyrion,¹⁰ Catholicos of Iberia, opposed to them the Council of Chalcedon and those that followed it ; he forbade, under pain of anathema, all intercourse with the setters forth of this strange doctrine, and thus preserved the Church whole and pure. Besides this, and notwithstanding the snares set by the orthodox Greeks of the same faith, who trafficked through Iberia as far as the frontiers of Persia, and who gratified their love of gain without regard to the sacrifice to which their oppressed brethren of Iberia were exposed in the person of King Stephen, who

between the hierarchy of the Armenian Church and other Eastern Churches are brought together in the book *Oriens Christianus*, vol. i. p. 1347 (ed. Paris, 1740).

¹⁰ Hist. of Tchamtchian, vol. iii. ch. 47 (Armenian text) ; also, *Bulletin Scientifique publié par l'Acad. des Sciences de S. Pétersb.* tom. v. No. 8. Among the Epistles of the Roman Pope Gregory there is one written by him in 603 to Kyrion Catholicos of Georgia (Epist. lib. ii. p. 67).

was put to death by them during the conflict that took place before under the Emperor Heraclius, Iberia continued firm in the Faith; and the Greek emperors, following a far from wise policy, and wishing to rule even over the Faith, were all but made to withdraw from the borders of Iberia.

V. In the ninth century the district of Ap'hkhazia, worried by inroads of Greeks, and exposed to the selfish purposes of the Greek emperors,¹¹ wished to have a separate head of the Church of their own, with the title of Catholicos of Ap'hkhazia and of Imereth. This object was facilitated with the Greek emperor through the family ties of Pancrat, or Bagrat, prince of the Ap'hkhazes. Bagrat then, himself took the title of king, having resolved to throw up all allegiance to the king of Iberia. This, of course, weakened the bond of union between the northern and the southern districts of Iberia; and it had, moreover, no small influence on the morality both of the savage Ap'hkhazes

¹¹ Cedrenus, pp. 548, 561, and 566; and acts of Domentius, Catholicos of Georgia.

and of the inhabitants of other districts who were led to follow their example; as, for instance, Imereth, Mingrelia, Guria,^c Swaneth,^d and other parts of the kingdom.

No sooner was Bagrat I. made king of Ap'hkhazia than the king of Iberia had to go to war with him, in order to conquer him. But, although the loss of political independence did not materially alter the existence of the neighbouring country of Georgia, it yet proved an injury and a source of danger to the Church; for at that time appeared signs of negligence in the management of the Church and of the faith of Ap'hkhazia. Troubles afflicted her; and

^c Guria is a district of Imereth, said to belong to Karthli, which extends from near Bationi (Batum), along the Black Sea, to the river Rioni. Wakhusht (Gheoghr. p. 414) derives the name from *guriaoba*, anarchy, or confusion; but M. Brosset, in a note to his translation, proposes to derive it either from "Guebres," fire-worshippers, or from "Huria," the Georgian for "Jews," said by Moses of Chorene to have been taken thither by Nebuchadnezzar. We saw, however, (p. 6) that Moses of Chorene (lib. ii. c. 7) does not speak of "Jews," but of "Iberians."

^d The Swaneth is a northern district of Imereth, between the Caucasus and the sea.

now, not Persians from without, but barbarians from within, tore her asunder, and both Church and country fell a sacrifice to the greatest misfortunes.

VI. Happily those misfortunes did not last long. The Iberians, having shaken off the yoke of the Ap'hkhazes, raised to the throne a king of the same house, and, with great zeal, showed their faith by their works, and prepared to follow steadily in the way of civilization. To that intent they sent into Greece and to Constantinople sons of freemen and of the clergy, in order that, after being themselves educated and civilized, they might bring home the same advantages to their own countrymen.

Of course the rending asunder of peoples of the same race, and of lands hitherto united, was not likely to lead to the welfare of the Church. Yet, in spite of this, the orthodox Faith continued pure ; yea, even rival rulers who cherished hatred and ill-will towards each other were nevertheless devoted to the Christian Faith. Unfortunately, the two nations of Georgia and of Imereth were at the same time entertaining mutual hatred for each other, and a disposition to reciprocal hostilities,

which increased in after-time. The king of Iberia saw with grief the falling away of the Ap'hkhazes, and the hatred of the inhabitants of Imereth for those of like faith ; but, by resorting to conciliatory measures, he saved his kingdom from the dangerous consequences of division ; and he set about confirming the remaining members of the Church in the bond of faith by spreading and establishing Christian principles among the people. The inhabitants of Imereth, on their side, ceased not to take up arms against their fellow-countrymen of the same faith, whether in order to recover their independence or to take the reins of government. It was only through partial victories on the side of Georgia, through the weakening of the whole of Imereth by the defection of vaivodes who raised themselves into independent princes, and through the gradual enlightenment of that country by the Faith and by sciences, that, in time, the tribes of Imereth ceased to struggle for their freedom if not for the mastery. And the spirit of the Gospel, effectually taught and diffused by faithful pastors and by kings, renewed for a time the bond of fellowship which had been either slackened or

broken between the two countries, as we find from sundry examples of a common opposition from both kingdoms to the persecution of the Church and of the orthodox Faith,

CHAPTER VI.

The B. Virgin of Iberia and the Iberian convent on Mt. Athos—Prosperity of the Church the result of the pious deeds of kings and the fruits of martyrdom—Conversion of the Eretes from the heresy of the Monophysites to the true Faith—Teaching of holy men in the Church—Georgians take part in the Crusades—State of the Church under King Dawith III,

IN the unhappy times for the Church brought on by the Iconoclasts in Constantinople (A.D. 821), Gabriel, a monk from Georgia, who was living on Mt. Athos in utter seclusion from his brethren, was deemed worthy to receive the image of the B. Virgin, which appeared to him from the sea, over against Mt. Athos. That image, honoured there in the

convent that was soon after built by Georgian monks, became renowned under the name of "the Iberian."¹

During the reign of the widow-Empress Zoe, the

¹ A correct copy of this wonder-working image, made for the use of King Alexis Michaelovitch, was brought to Moscow by the Archimandrite Pakhom of the Iberian monastery on Mt. Athos ; and in 1669 it was, with his consent, given to the monastery of Kitais, formerly called *Nikola bolshaya glaba*, founded in 1556, and afterwards changed to the Greek of Nikolaev, a convent of second class, immediately dependent on the Synod, (*Stavropighialnii vtoroclasnii*) allowed by the Iberian Church to belong to one archimandrite and to four elders, for the exercise therein of the service in the Greek language, and possessed of a charter.

Already, in the year 1654, a monastery was built near the town of Balda, on one of the islands of the lake of Balda, dedicated to the B. V. Mary. The Patriarch Nikon built it with taste, after the pattern of the Iberian convent on Mt. Athos. He took as a guide the image of the B. V. Mary. On that island there are six churches of stone.

In the year 1613, and at about thirty versts from Kazan, a hermitage was built by the Hieromonachos Philarète, under the name of *Raiphskaya Bogoroditskaya*. There are in it fifteen churches, the chief of which is synodal, bears the name of the B. V. Mary of Georgia ; and there also may be seen a wonder-working image. This hermitage is placed under the rule of an abbot or prior.

Iberian Prince Tornikius, who served gloriously in the Greek army, took the order of monk, and withdrew to Mt. Athos, in the days of S. Athanasius of that place, together with two other princes of the same country, who also became monks. The fame of this man shone not only in his great efforts as a religious of his order, but also in his building there a general convent, spacious and rich, the fruit of his military deeds. It happened thus. When war broke out between the Persians and the Byzantine empire, the Greeks found themselves without an able general. Then Tornikius, who before had already distinguished himself by his valour on the field of battle, was called from his cell in the convent; and, at the repeated instances of S. Athanasius, and with his blessing, he took the command of the Greek army and ended the war with glory.² The Greeks, to show their

² This story, borrowed from the descriptive history of Georgia (pp. 13, 14), is told, with a few verbal alterations, both by Armenian and by Greek historians. We are indebted for a good criticism thereon to M. Brosset, in the article *Histoire des Bagratides Georgiens, d'après les Auteurs Arméniens et Grecs, jusqu'au commencement du xi^e siècle*,

gratitude, rendered him great assistance by building on Mt. Athos a new monastery, which subsists to this day, and retains its original name of the Iberian convent.³ Tornikius, promoted to

inserted in the "Bulletin de la Classe Historico-Philologique de l'Acad. Impér. de S. P. B." tom. i. No. 12, 13.

³ We find in the annals of this monastery the details of the circumstances that followed the contests with the Persians under the government of Prince Tornikius. In the sacristy of that monastery, and in memory of the hero and founder of it, who was also its first archimandrite, are at present kept his armour and his weapons, remarkable for their weight and precious ornaments. The Russian Basil Gregorovitch Barskii, who travelled on foot to holy places, saw those rarities and described them in his book (*Journey to Holy Places*, p. 580 and following). He also describes the Iberian monasteries built at Jerusalem by kings of Georgia, and the first of those convents by the Georgian Prince Tamian, in the fifth century, at p. 201 and following. Mention is also made of this monastery, and of another also, known under the name "*Lazorum in eremo Hierosolymytana*" (τὸ τῶν λαζῶν ἐν ἐρήμῳ Ἱεροσολύμων) by Procopius, *De Ædificiis*, lib. v. cap. ix. In *Chron. Cyprii*, append. the seal of this monastery is noticed with the inscription Σφραγὶς μονῆς τῶν Ἰβήρων τῆς ὑπεραγίας θεοτόκου τῆς πορταϊτήβης.

The Iberian monastery, which is third in order of the monasteries on Mt. Athos, was at first planted by three monks formerly kings of Georgia, John, Euthymius, and

George. It stands on the sea-shore, under high mountains. The above-named kings first built there a small habitation, with a church, rich, magnificent, and rendered famous by the number of its confessors and champions, and afterwards by the wonder-working image of the B. V. Mary of Iberia. After the death of the Greek emperor Roman, and on the occasion of the war breaking out against Persia, that spread alarm in Constantinople, Queen Zoe called Tornikius from his modest cell and estate of monk of Mt. Athos. But, unwilling as he was to accede to the prayers of the court, he yielded at last to the unanimous intreaties of the hermits of Mt. Athos and to the will and blessing of S. Athanasius of that place. General Tornikius, having defeated the Persians and made peace with them, became archimandrite; and, instead of rank and honours, he begged for means wherewith to build a greater and a better monastery. Thus helped, he increased the number of cells, enlarged the church, and added to it several cupolas, surrounding it with high walls, which subsist to this day. By the will of the founder the principal temple was dedicated to the Assumption of the B. V. Mary, instead of the former one, dedicated to Precursor S. John the Baptist. That temple bore this name until the time of Theophilus the iconoclast.

But in the reign of Theophilus (A.D. 827—842), who raised a furious persecution against the worshippers of images, some pious Christians of Constantinople, according to tradition, cast the image of the B. V. Mary into the sea, rather than let it fall into the impious hands of those who carried out the will of the emperor. By God's direction this image, surrounded by a bright halo, floated down to Mt. Athos, and stood in view of the monasteries. A reverend

father and monk from among the Georgians, who was living separate from his brethren, was thought worthy, through the support of faith which overcomes one's nature, to go into the sea and to take the holy image of the B. V. Mary. That image was at once placed in the Iberian monastery; but as that monastery finds itself, by the ascent to Aphon, near to the gates of the whole mountain, it received the name of *Πορτήτης* (gate-keeper). On that occasion a church was built at the expense of the kings of Georgia and dedicated to that wonderful image, adorned and set in silver, with an inscription in Georgian.

In the monastery itself are found the following churches :—

1. The great mother church of the Assumption of the B. V. Mary. This temple, says the traveller Barskii, is most beautiful, adorned with marble pillars, high windows, candelabra, tapers, and other valuable church furniture. The cupola of the principal temple is supported by four pillars of white marble, remarkably well finished; the whole temple and the walls are adorned with marble pillars, and the whole floor with marbles of various colours; and the windows are finished with a tracery of costly green stone. The choir is the most beautiful of all others on Mt. Athos. And, as to the excellent finish of the floor, Barskii describes it in this wise :—The floor, here as also in the *laura*, or monastery of the first order, is laid with the most costly marbles of various colours, and in patterns which, for beauty and variety, it is impossible to describe. Among the rarities of this temple we may remark especially (*a*) a candelabrum of crystal and another of copper, with forty-six sockets; (*b*) four images adorned with pearls, before which stand silver candlesticks; (*c*) a table for the consecration of the bread, made of ivory, very beau-

tifully worked, and covered with pearls ; (*a*) the seat of the prior, admirably carved and gilt ; with other rich offerings from wealthy Russians, who loved to adorn the temple of God ; crosses of silver and of copper with Russian inscriptions, Gospels richly illuminated, a chalice, and other precious articles consecrated to the service of God.

2. The second temple, consecrated to the image of the B. V. Mary of Iberia, built by Georgian princes at the expense of kings of Georgia, afterwards restored by the illustrious Prince John Serbin, vaivode of Cantacuzen, is supported by white marble columns, highly worked. In the porch of the temple are portraits of Greek philosophers, who, in the gloom of heathenism, drew near to the mysteries of Christianity—such as Plato, Aristotle, Solon, Chilon, Plutarch, and Thucydides ; below every one of these sages is written some remarkable sentence of his.

3. The Church of S. John the Baptist, or the Precursor :—one half of this temple is all covered with marble ; it has also marble columns of a green stone, and pillars more exquisitely beautiful than those of the temple above described.

Besides these, there are the following sixteen lesser temples and oratories of the Iberian convent :—

1. Dedicated to S. Nicolas.
2. Synod of the Holy Archangel.
3. Entrance to the temple of the B. V. Mary.
4. S. Eustathius.
5. S. Stephen, proto-martyr.
6. Constantine and Helena.
7. Transfiguration of our Lord.
8. S. John the Theologian.
9. All Saints.

the post of archimandrite of that monastery, ended there his glorious, long, and angelic life.

10. S. Damian and Panteleimon.
11. S. George, martyr.
12. Exaltation of the Holy Cross.
13. S. Spindon, thaumaturge.
14. Dionysius the Areopagite.
15. S. Neophytus, martyr.
16. S. Modestus.

In the sacristy of this monastery travellers are shown the arms and the armour of Tornikius, chief promoter of the Iberian monastery. Of these Barskii speaks in this wise : "In the sacristy of that convent his (Tornikius's) armour is preserved, weapons alike wonderful and worthy of all praise" (Journey, &c., 2nd ed. p. 580).

This monastery has also a remarkable library, a quantity of bones of saints, deeds of hand of Russian and Georgian kings, and of Greek emperors, called *Chrisobuli*. Among them we may remark two of John Cantacuzen, written on parchment in the year 1341 ; of the Servian king Stephen, in 1306 ; of the Greek emperor John Paleologus, given in 1357 ; of Michael Duke (1073) Angelus Comnene ; of Paleologus, in the year 1200 ; of Andronicus, in 1184. Of all these the deeds of the kings of Georgia draw the special attention of the traveller. "The Chrisobule," says the same writer, "is distinguished from all other documents by the number of seals, and by silver capitals on many leaves joined together and neatly written—an honour that belongs to the Georgians alone, for it was all written in their characters" (p. 593).

II. Neither wars, nor revolutions, nor yet the internal weakening of the Church, which increased in time, could hinder the progress of outward enlightenment, in proportion of which the inward strengthening of the Faith found increase and support. We may judge of that degree of civilization from the few remaining monuments that escaped being entirely destroyed by fire, and by the ravages of time, by the Mahomedan thralldom, and by mountain tribes which harassed the Church, not so much from a feeling of hatred to her as from an innate disposition to lawlessness and to rapine. Such destruction of existing monuments was all the more disastrous, as at that time public libraries, and other collections of books in monasteries, were still far from common. As regards outward and visible proofs of individual piety, that period is remarkable for the building of monasteries by pious princes and by kings; for the beautifying of temples; for the costly gifts and riches poured into them by Christians; and for the endowment of the same with lands and villages, charged with the maintenance of the clergy, and with that of anchorites living in solitude.

III. In Georgia personal piety showed itself in the building of the church to the B. Virgin of Khakhul,^a in that of the cathedral of Bedia,^b of Sap'hara,^c and of Kitai,^d in the beautifying of the monastery of Gaenat,⁴ and of others such. Out of zeal for the

^a Khakhul.—The church and monastery of that name are situated between the river Thorthorin and the Ship'haklu mountains, in the western part of Samtzhké. It was built by Dawith, who adopted Bagrat III. It was afterwards restored and embellished by Dawith the Reformer.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 124.

^b Bedia was formerly called Egris, from Egros, son of Thogarma, who came and settled there, in Imereth. Bagrat, LIVth king of Georgia, built there a beautiful church, and appointed thereto a bishop of the Odish, a district of Imereth. Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 400.

^c Sap'hara, a convent on the banks of the Ghrel, not far from Akhal-tzikhé, in Samtzhké.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 90.

^d Kuthathis, Kitais, or Kuthai, on the Rioni, in Imereth, was built by Leon, Ist king of the Ap'khazes. Bagrat, LVIth king of Georgia, built therein a rich and spacious church, adorned with mosaic and marbles of various colours, and made it a bishopric.—Wakh. Gheogr. p. 370.

The temple of Kitais, that was destroyed by the Turks in 1691, and which now is shown in ruins, was built by King Bagrat III. and by the wife of Bagrat IV., Queen Helena, daughter of the Greek emperor Roman Argir, at the beginning of the xith century.

⁴ The monastery of Gaenat was built by King David the

saints, other temples were then either restored or built in memory of men who had suffered for the

Reformer (1089—1126). There is shown to this day the gate of Darbent, the trophy of a victory of King David III., with cufic inscriptions, deciphered by the academicien Fresne, in "Erklärung der Arabischen Inschrift des eisernen Thorflügels im Kloster zu Gelathi in Imerethi, mit zwei lithogr. Tafeln," St. Pet. 1836, tom. iii. *Mémoire de l'Acad. Impér. des Sciences* ; vi^e Série, *Science historique*, &c.

The cathedral of Sap'hara is found at seven versts from Akhaltzikhé. It was built in the xth century by vice-rois of Western Georgia, who afterwards were called Atabegs. This temple, remarkable for its architecture, for marvellous specimens of sculpture, and for many historical monuments, has remained empty since the year 1625, when, through the wiles of Saphar-Pasha, who then ruled over Akhal-tzikhé, the inhabitants of those parts were made to embrace Islamism. The Count Paskevitch Eviv, who obtained for Georgia her former condition, reopened that temple for Divine service in 1829. The architecture thereof astonishes every one, even the celebrated traveller in the Caucasus, M. Du Bois (*Voyage autour du Caucase*, tom. ii. p. 292—299). This temple was at first dedicated to the intercession of the B. V. Mary.

Khakhul is a small place at the western extremity of the Georgian settlements on the river Ispiri, bounded by the ancient Cappadocia, and a monastery to the B. V. Mary, celebrated in Georgian history, adorned with rich offerings of kings ; it was built by David Curopalates, the adopted

Faith; such are, for instance, the temple of the B. V. Mary in Tiflis, on the same spot where people worship the relics of Shushanika, or Susanna, queen of Rhan, who, as we saw above, received the crown of martyrdom at the hands of her husband Vaskan, a worshipper of fire; the temples dedicated to the martyr Eustathius, to the martyrs David and Constantine, to King Archil, to S. Constantine, to the martyr Gobron, to the worker of miracles S. Hilarion,⁵ and to others.

son of Bagrat, who succeeded him on the throne in 1089-1126, under the title of Bagrat IV. The image of the B. V. Mary that stood in the temple, one of the oldest, richest, and rarest of images, was brought into Imereth at the time of the invasion of the Mahomedans into Samtzheth, and is now found in the monastery of Gaenat, at seven versts from the town of Kitais. The monastery of the B. V. Mary of Khakhul and other churches were also left empty in the xvth century. The ruins of that rich temple, which remain there to this day, remind one of the perversion of Christians to Islamism, who nevertheless preserved the customs and the language of their brethren of the same blood, by not forgetting, during seven centuries, the image of the B. V. Mary of Khakhul and the faith of their ancestors.

⁵ This worker of miracles was descended from the princes of Kakheth Vatchnadz, and from the year 869 became superior

Besides this, festivals in honour of these saints were instituted, in order to bring and keep together as well as to encourage the people, harassed as they were by the frequent incursions of their enemies. On the other hand, the earnestness of the great efforts made from monasteries for the good of the surrounding country and villages brought out many good and holy men, encouraged by the example of Prince Dawith, son of Sambat, a grandee of the realm ; of Adamas and of Basil, sons of Bagrat who took religious orders. Thus were monasteries not only kept up as means of good to the country, but thus also were they oftentimes richly endowed and otherwise supported.

of the hermitage of Davido-Garedj. Fleeing from the glory of men—for he would not accept the episcopate offered him by the king and by the people, he withdrew himself to Greece. After visiting many places, such as Jerusalem, Rome, &c., he at last settled in Thessalonica, where he died, in the year 882, aged 89. The Greek emperor Basilius of Macedonia brought the remains of this holy man from Thessaly to Tzaregrad and laid them in the monastery of the Holy Apostle called Romanus (?). This saint distinguished himself by the translation of the Holy Scriptures and of ascetic writings from Greek into Georgian.

IV. The zeal for the orthodox faith, which is a distinctive feature of very many kings of Georgia, was not long in enlightening the Eretes, at that time poisoned with the Arian heresy, and with that of the Monophysites. So also the establishment at that time of the eparchy of Ishkondit, in Mingrelia, by King George, and of that of Mokuski, in Samurtshakan, by King Leon; the gathering of the relics of those who had pleased God during their life; the translation from the Greek language of all books of the Church, and of some other theological works by Georgian teachers, brought up in the convent of Mt. Athos and at Constantinople—as, for instance, by John of Athos, Euthymius, and Gregory; as well as the zeal and the efforts of Gregory, Arsen, Antonius, Basilius, Cyprian, Bishop of Samthavi, of George, celebrated under the name of *Sviatogorets*, the holy mountaineer; of S. Hilarion, and of others,—strengthened and established the Church for ever; and kings, by founding and supporting schools, contributed to the enlightenment of many of their subjects. These learned and educated men not only corrected and purified the Georgian language, which hitherto was un-

formed, but they also wrote much in prose and in verse, and translated still more works of the best Greek authors. The kings of Georgia, on their side, did not only found and support schools for the enlightenment and civilization of the people, but they also made other efforts to multiply teachers. To that effect they frequently sent to Greece, for their education, a considerable number of children, for the most part of the more honourable families in the land, and already more or less prepared at home by a like education, so as to perfect themselves in the learning of that time. Among such men, to whom Georgia is greatly indebted for light and knowledge, we may notice John Patricius, a scholastic philosopher, surnamed Tchirtchimius,⁶ Stephen, and others. These learned men brought back into their native land the creations of Greek intelligence; they translated into the Georgian language some of the works of Plato, of Aristotle, of Porphyrius, of Damascius,

⁶ The most remarkable of his translations from the Greek is that of the philosophical works of Proclus Diadochus.

and of others, translations which exist at present in manuscript.

V. History tells us that the Georgians, although separated from Europe, were yet near enough to it to share in the spirit which at that time roused the whole of Europe, and with it they also took up arms for the Crusades. Flattered at the thought of conquering the world, and of rescuing the grave of our Lord from the enemies of Christianity, Georgia sent a few troops on that expedition ; but those courageous defenders of the Faith were wrecked on the Black Sea. This untoward accident, however, did not hinder fresh attempts on the part of the Georgians. The glory of the victories and the report of disasters carried here and there over the world, and, as a Greek writer (Anna Comnena Hist. of Emp. Alexis) says, shaking the whole of Europe to her foundations, led the Georgians to set on foot another expedition. The success thereof is not known ; but the Georgian crusaders probably joined the Syrian Christians and the Armenian princes, who went forth on an expedition after the victory of the Saracens, and who joined it under the name of Captains of the West.

VI. Notwithstanding all the increase of light, the Church of Iberia did not remain free from internal divisions and dissensions. These were all the more felt as the estrangement of the people of Imereth begat hatred on their part for the Georgians of the same faith with themselves, in addition to the little love which existed between these two countries, independently of faith or of brotherhood. These times, troublous, and often even stormy, by reason of the frequent attacks of the Persians and of the Turks, required a king of a strong mind and of a firm character. Such was Dawith or David III., who came to the throne in the year 1089. He called together a synod,⁷ and cleansed the Church of sundry remnants of heresy: at the time, too, when the whole of Asia seemed divided between the heresy of the Monophysites and that of the Acephalites, spread right and left by whole companies of monks who wandered about Georgia deceiving those who were weak enough to hearken to them. Things went so far that even the bishops

⁷ The synodal act of that time was discovered by me (P. Ioselian) in the library of the temple of Mtskhetha.

and pastors of the people despaired of maintaining the orthodox faith.

News of all this reached the ears of the Roman emperor Diogenes.⁸ He endeavoured to devise means whereby to prevent further schisms in the churches of Asia ; but political considerations did not leave him free to carry his good intentions into effect ; so that, after having tarried awhile on the borders of Iberia, he returned to Constantinople. Meanwhile zealous opponents of the Greek Church scattered about in Asia did their best to injure the orthodox faith in Iberia by spreading their false doctrines among the faithful. But, as the wickedness of their motives became apparent, the Church doubled her efforts and care in preserving the purity of the Faith among her sons. Then the reaction that

⁸ These are the words of Joh. Cyllitze Curopalates : Tot nationum Turcorum et Saracenorum concursus et concitatio et eorum qui sub Romanis degebant defectio ira divina quidem evenere contra Hæreticos, qui Iberiam et Mesopotamiam usque ad Sicandrum et Melitenem et finitimam incolunt Armeniam. Judaicamque Nestorii et Acephalorum colunt hæresim, et enim plenæ sunt hæc regiones hujuscemodi pravæ opinionis. —Cedren. vol. ii. p. 814.

⁹ History of Georgia by Wakhusht.

followed against those heterodox teachers soon found an opportunity of turning itself against Arians as well ; or, more correctly, perhaps, against those Arians who had embraced the heresy of the Monophysites.

King David, after his victory over the Armenians and the storming of their city Ani, called together a synod, over which presided John, Catholicos of Iberia, and the learned bishops Arsen of Ikaltska, Ephrem the younger, Theophilus, and John, surnamed Taitch. These learned men might have been inclined towards the orthodoxy of the Armenian bishops then present at the synod ; but the Armenian people, having received information of this, would not hear of even the least alteration in their Faith ; wherefore, with the exception of increased enmity between the two nations, the synod rose without any results. Moreover, about the year 1147, the Church of Constantinople, making fresh efforts, succeeded in bringing the Armenians into union with herself ; and, after lengthened deliberations of Armenian bishops with learned Greek and Georgian bishops, held before the Emperor Michael Comnene, which were thus dragged

on because the Greeks insisted on the complete alteration of rites adopted from olden time and firmly rooted in Armenia, a certain Theorian travelled from Constantinople into Armenia, and, as himself relates, persuaded the bishops and pastors of the Armenian Church to give up every difference between them and the Eastern Church. As to what other results his return to Constantinople had, neither Theorian himself nor other writers tell us aught. It is probable that, owing to the troubles of the time, he did not succeed in reaching Constantinople alive.¹⁰

The good deeds of King David in behalf of the Faith were not limited to Georgia only; for he sent rich presents to Jerusalem, to Mt. Athos, to Mt. Sinai, and to Cyprus. On Mt. Sinai he built, at his own expense, though it is not known on what occasion, a temple dedicated to the Holy Virgin and martyr Catherine, and he placed there a metropolitan.¹¹ During his encounters with

¹⁰ Spanh. Hist. Eccl. sæc. xii. cap. 9.

¹¹ Cluveri Introductio Geogr. lib. v. cap. xvi. Vide notam Bunonis Hist. Nov. Test. pars v. aut. Joh. Henr. Hottingeri, p. 49.

enemies both of the Church and of his country David never once forgot that it was God himself who blessed his efforts and protected his life. Thus, on his own testimony, while meeting an attack from the Turks, both he and his enemies saw S. George protecting him ; and, on another occasion, he was saved from instant death by a special act of faith, when a thunderbolt falling upon him was prevented from hurting him by the golden image of the Archangel Michael which he wore on his breast.

An invasion of Iberia by Greeks obliged David to defend the frontiers of his dominions and to seek redress with the sword. On account of the great services which David rendered to his own kingdom, harassed as it was by incursions of the Persians, he was surnamed *the Reformer* ; while, for his holy life, which always shone with good deeds, as well as for his constant defence of the Faith, he was numbered among the saints, and is feasted by the Georgian Church on the 26th of January.

CHAPTER VII.

Learned men in the Church—Restoration of the Convent of the Holy Cross at Jerusalem—State of the Church during the reign of Queen Tamar—Reign of George VII.—Victories of Gengis-Khan—Disunion among the principalities of Georgia — Remarkable men of that time.



IN the flourishing days of Georgia—that is, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries—the Georgian Church was adorned with very many learned and enlightened men. Almost all of them taught in places where Christian sciences found refuge from the barbarism of the Middle Ages; many attained to the highest then possible eminence of spiritual instruction, even in the interior of the country, whether through their own

superiority of mind or through the introduction and assistance of the public teachers of the land, who, being often even of the rank of high priests, did not object to the work of teaching, in consideration of the great want of instructors for the people. Among those men are especially remarkable—

(1) *Arsenius* of Ikaltsha, who was brought out of the caves of Shiomginsk, at the earnest instance of the king, to be the court chaplain. Cotemporary writers call him theologian, physician, metaphysician, syllogistic, and poet, both spiritual and secular ; (2) *Ephrem*, the younger, schoolfellow of Arsenius ; (3) *George*, first founder in Tiflis of the high school for noblemen and for the children of the clergy, translated from the Greek sundry books of the Holy Scriptures, and multiplied copies of them, through his own teachers, copyists, and caligraphists, for the use of many churches ; (4) *Theophilus*, called, in the Georgian Church, “creator of hymnology,” translated from the Greek many books into the Georgian language, and composed several hymns in honour of Georgian saints ; (5) *John Taitcha*, whose compositions are still extant, they say, in the Iberian convent on Mt. Athos. Among the learned men

of that time we may also reckon *Demetrius*, an ascetic of the solitude of Garedj.

II. Towards the middle of the eleventh century a monk native of Shabtel, by name Prochorus, was sent to Jerusalem, and there took up his abode in the convent of the Holy Cross.¹ He was furnished by

¹ The convent at Jerusalem, dedicated to the "Holy Cross of our Salvation" (of the Holy Cross), was at first built by King Tatian (?), in the vith century. Ever since it has never been in want of repairs, owing to the interest taken in it by the Iberians and by the Patriarchs of Jerusalem. At the end of the xvith century it contained 220 cells. Among other offerings, one remarks there three silver candelabra, a cross of gilt silver, that contains a fragment of the true Cross, a span in length and an inch thick. Once the floor of the temple was all marble, but now it is covered with white stones resembling marble. There are yet four more churches. Against the walls are the representations of sundry kings of Georgia and of patriarchs of Jerusalem who took interest in the improvement and adorning of this convent with Georgian inscriptions. Formerly there were in it many images. This convent has at present, in Tiflis, a conventual church and house in connection with it, under the name of the Holy Cross; fields, lands, and labourers, granted to it by kings of Georgia; and is under the management of the Greek archimandrite, who collects the revenues yearly, and who dispenses them for the use of the convent in Jerusalem.

King Bagrat Curopalat, who before had interested himself in behalf of that convent, with a sufficient

During the troublous times of Georgia, and the massacre of Georgian monks by invading Ethiopians, this convent passed into the hands of the Armenians. But the king of Georgia, having asked it of the sultan of Egypt, himself restored to the country this ancient possession. See *Travels of Baumgarten* (in Latin), about the year 1500; lib. ii. c. ix.

The number of monasteries erected in Palestine by the kings of Georgia amounts to eleven. As a payment for the outlay of the war, the king of Georgia received from the Greek emperor one half of Golgotha; and, having covered it with monasteries, he set over it his own bishop. When the prosperous days of Georgia began to wane, it was bought partly by Armenians and partly by united Greeks (Mouravieff, *Trav.* vol. ii. p. 88). The Catholics refer the building of these monasteries to Spaniards, who founded them under the common appellation of "Iberes;" but this never once misled historians that are not shortsighted in their investigations. For, the common report of the Greeks, which ascribes these monasteries to Georgians, is confirmed by the opinion of Armenians themselves, who consider that they are bound, by a deed preserved in the patriarchate of Jerusalem, to make over this sanctuary to the Georgians as soon as ever these are in a state to pay to the Porte a tribute for the possession of the convent that bears their name. The grounds on which the Franks ascribe to Spaniards the building of the convent of S. James in particular are only the interior architecture of the synodal church, which partakes of the Byzantine and of the Western styles

sum of money for the restoration and beautifying thereof. But that establishment, after having for a long time been the abode and refuge of pilgrims from Georgia to Jerusalem, fell into decay. The pillars that support the dome of the convent, which had, by reason of old age, reached a hopeless state, were restored and decorated by Shota Rustavel, treasurer of Queen Tamar, who mentions him in a poem written by herself under the name of *Barsova koja*, "The Panther's Skin," wherein he is also represented or described under the appearance of an old man.

III. Notwithstanding the yoke of Mohammedan-

(Mourav. Trav. vol. ii. pp. 72, 73). The Georgians, however, oppressed by the Turks, who ruled over the Vaivode of Samtske-Saatabeg (district of Akhaltsikhé), did not resign their sanctuaries in Palestine before the beginning of the xviith century. For the German councillor Baumgarten, who travelled in Palestine about the year 1525, saw, in the temple of Solomon, Georgians praising the one and same God, together with Franks, Greeks, Syrians, Jacobites, Indians or Abyssinians, and Armenians. Among all these the Georgians took the fourth place in the temple; that is, after Romans, Greeks, and Syrians. And he also says that still in the xvth century the Georgians had possession of the convent on Golgotha (lib. ii. c. 9).

ism, that weighed heavily on all parts of the world then conquered by Christianity, the Church of Iberia stood her ground manfully in the midst of the fears, wars, and incursions of her enemies. The kings who sat on the throne of Georgia after David the Reformer imitated the piety, the firmness, and, in general, the example of their honourable and worthy predecessor, courageously defended and protected the Church, and fought for her honour and for the increase of knowledge. King George III. and his daughter Tamar reaped the fruits of their efforts in a thorough renovation of Iberia (A.D. 1150). The period of this queen's reign, called the golden age of Georgian literature, and the writings of that time that have come down to us, show that she bestowed great attention on the literature of her time, both ecclesiastical and civil (A.D. 1174).

After proclaiming Iberia an imperial government, she proceeded, within a short time, to bring under her rule the whole of Ap'hkhazia, all the inhabitants of the mountains, Imereth, Karthalinia, and Kak-heth. She called a synod in Mtskhetha for the purpose of confirming the Church, by the establishment

of ceremonies, in harmony with the institutions of the Greek Church. Twice did Tamar put to flight the Turks, come out for the conquest of Iberia. During two terrible battles she herself saw the finger of God directing her to the fight, and, with her soldiers, witnessed the miraculous conversion of one of the Mohammedan generals who was made prisoner. Treading in the footsteps of David and of his heroism, she sent presents and made gifts to many places in the Greek empire the most exposed to the Turkish arms. Historians remark that the Greek emperor wished to avail himself of some of those presents, which he took by force from the Georgian ambassadors. But the Georgians avenged themselves of this on him, by making incursions against Trapezus, Sinope, into Paphlagonia, upon the shores of the Black Sea subject to the Greek rule, and into Cappadocia. Besides all this, innumerable churches on mountains and in forests, built in places memorable for glorious events of that or of the preceding time; the adorning and endowing of temples with gifts of gold, silver, and precious stones, as offerings to the precious objects of Faith and of piety; the beautifying of monasteries both at

home² and abroad, at Jerusalem, on Mt. Athos, and on Mt. Sinai; about 300,000 troops for the defence of the nation against the enemies of the Church; and a tribute laid on the Armenians and on the Ap'hkhazes, form other proofs of Tamar's power and of her zeal in doing good.

IV. After the reign of Queen Tamar (A.D. 1204) the Georgian Church suffered persecution at the hands of some of her ambitious pastors. This proved to be for her all the greater evil, as, for about two years, the Tartars and the Persians endeavoured to prevail against her with the Coran. But Providence, in order to stay the misfortunes of those days, appeared in the person of George VII., who shook off the yoke of the Persians and of the Greeks in the time of Paleologus. He, being himself a pattern of Christian bearing and manners, which he set forth in the strict rule of a Christian life, rebuilt at Jeru-

² Among numerous edifices raised by Queen Tamar in Georgia and in Imereth, we may remark especially the temple dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and built on ancient foundations, in the northern part of Kakheth, on the left bank of the Alazan, in a small place called *Albani*. There also are seen the remains of her castle or palace.

saalem nearly the whole of Golgotha, having obtained it from the Greeks in exchange for subsidies he had sent them. Throughout history he is called "the Morning Star;" the native writers compare him with Jeremiah and Zorobabel; and they describe the era of his reign as "the sun" of Georgian history.

V. The times of the irruption of the Mongols into Georgia were of the hardest for the Christians (A.D. 1176—1229). By order of Gengis-Khan, Christians of all ages, ranks, and conditions were brought into the temples and there burnt alive. Pyramids of human heads marked his progress through the country, the swords of his soldiers having put to death 300,000 Christians. In the city of Mtskhetha itself, that was a monument of primitive Christianity, he left nothing but traces of the walls and mounds of ruins; he slew all the inhabitants who had remained in the city; he witnessed himself the destruction, down to the foundations, of the cathedral, which was a beautiful relic of ancient architecture; he visited with like destruction all the monasteries and the cathedrals of the several dioceses, including the

monastery of Bodba, wherein rest the bones of Nina, the light of Georgia. It is possible that all this cruelty might be owing to the fact that the Iberians, in order beforehand to protect themselves from the ravaging sword of Gengis-Khan, left their houses in prey to the cruelty, rapine, and destroying hordes of the barbarians, and, at the time of his arrival, hid themselves in forests and in inaccessible mountain passes.

VI. As if for a greater increase of misfortune to the Church, soon after the death of Queen Rusudana, Iberia, which was already divided into the two kingdoms of Imereth and of Kakheth, suffered a fresh dismemberment of her own kingdom into independent states, such as those of Odish (Mingrelia), Guria, Ap'hkhazia, Swaneth, and Djikheth,^a the result of which was the entire falling away from the Faith of all the Ap'hkhazes, Djikhethes, Ossetes, Kabardes, and Kisthethes.^b The kingdom of Iberia,

^a The Djiketh is a district of Imereth, to the north of Ap'khazeth. The inhabitants thereof, once Christians, have now lost all Christianity.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 408.

^b Kistheth is a district in North Sakheth.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 328.

together with the district of Radchana,^c was yet at peace, and her kings, crowned in the city of Kitais, quietly occupied the throne until the invasion of Tamerlan, God's scourge on the sins of Iberia, as historians call him.

VII. In the midst of woeful misfortunes and of the devastation caused by Gengis-Khan and by the wars of the sultan, God's Providence for the consolation of the Church was marvellously displayed in the patient endurance of confessors and of martyrs. Such were : (1) *Shalva*, son of a vaivode of Akhal-Tzikhé,^d who would not hearken to the persuasive entreaties of the Sultan to change his faith (A.D. 1272); (2) *Demetrius*, king of Iberia (A.D. 1289), who from the first professed the faith of Christ before infuriated Mohammedan teachers, and who after that received the crown of martyrdom in Persia (A.D. 1289—1294);

^c The district of Radcha is in the centre of Imereth, on the river Rioni, not far from where it bends its course from north to south.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 372.

^d Akhal-Tzikhé is a fortified town on the river of the same name, in the Samtzhkhé. It enjoys a beautiful climate, and was the residence of a pasha, whom the Georgians called Athabeg, and the Turks, the Pasha of Akhal-Tzikhé and of the whole Samtzhkhé.—Wakh. p. 84, *et seq.*

(3) King Wakhtang, and a multitude of other Christians and faithful pastors. Examples of earnest life through faith were set by *Basilus*, known as the uncle of the Catholicos Euphemius; by *Pimen*, who preached the Christian faith in Daghestan among the mutinous inhabitants of the shores of the Caspian Sea, renowned for his piety, and burning with love and zeal for Christ's sake; and by *Antoni Naokhrebuli* who shut the mouth of preachers of the Coran by his simple but powerful discussions. Unfortunately for the Church, true Christians were greatly diminished under the Tartar and the Mussulman rule. Through the general corruption of Mezkhia, the Christians of Imereth fell upon the property of the Church, and many either took to reducing the revenues of the churches and monasteries, or at all events to turn them to their own use. With the destruction of temples and of churches by the Tartars, many waxed cold in their inward zeal for the Faith and for good works.

The Catholicos Nicolai, both learned and zealous for good works, alone maintained a Christian spirit of zeal, and inspired with it all classes of the people. Meanwhile Christians, having forgotten the faith in

God, were made to acknowledge proofs of His providence in terrible chastisements and other manifestations, such as the yoke of the Tartar rule, appalling earthquakes during the solemn festival of our Lord's glorious resurrection, and a famine which for five years raged over the whole of Iberia.

CHAPTER VIII.

Correspondence between Queen Rusudana and the Roman Court on the occasion of the appearance of Roman monks in Georgia—Invasion of Georgia by Tamerlan—Flight of King Alexander, of Demetrius, and of others into the wilderness—Attempt of the Mohammedans to turn Colchis and Imereth to Islamism—Intentions of the Pope regarding the Georgian Church—The Council of Florence—Intentions of Lutheran preachers.



DURING the reign of Queen Rusudana (A.D. 1219—1239) began the first relations of Iberia with the Western Christians, on the occasion of the separation of these from the Greek Church. What led to this was the incessant incursions of Turks and Persians into Georgia, and their strenuous efforts to exterminate

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Christianity and to subject the country to Islamism. Queen Rusudana applied by letter to Pope Gregory IX., in 1239,¹ and begged of him protection from the Tartars. Instead of the assistance which she asked, he sent her seven monks of the order of Preachers (*patres prædicatores*), whose errand was to promote in Georgia the arrogant intentions of the court of Rome. In his letter the Pope regretted his inability to comply with the queen's wishes, while, with the usual crafty diplomacy of Rome, he ceased not to flatter the queen, by praising the faith of the Georgians, and their good name as Christians, to try and persuade the queen to submit herself and her people to the chair of St. Peter and to the warden of the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. But even when the predecessor of Gregory IX., Honorius III., made the same propositions to Queen Rusudana, she expressed her decided unwillingness to submit to the Western Church. This, however, did not hinder Georgians, together with Armenians, from being ready to unite with soldiers of the West,²

¹ Ap. Rayn. n. 9.

² The Georgians, terrified by the invasions of Tartars and

and to make common cause against the Saracens. So great was the ardour with which this rising³ took place that even women took up arms for the defence of the Faith.

of Saracens, were compelled, at the request of the former, to make common cause with them against the Saracens, who, after destroying Ptolemais (A.D. 1291), the last refuge of the Latins, took possession of the whole of Syria and of Palestine. The Tartars, having joined the Georgian and the Armenian troops to their own under their General Kaptchak, succeeded in staying for awhile the progress of the Saracens. But, after they had embraced Islamism, in union with the Saracens, they proceeded to the subjugation of the whole East (Marini Sancti, *Hist. Belli Sacri*, lib. xiii. cap. 8; and Guil. Mengis in *Chronico*). The fears of the Georgians were turned towards this invasion, as well as those of all European sovereigns, not one of whom hesitated to fight for the freedom of Christians in the East.—*Hist. of the Church*, Innok, vol. ii. p. 262, 1817; Vinc. Belvac. de *Reb. Orient.* lib. xxxii. c. 9.

³ We may see, in Vinc. Belvac. de *Reb. Orientis*, lib. xxx. cap. 74—76, to what extent rose the hatred of the Persians, but especially that of the Tartars and of the Mongols, for the Georgians. He mentions the irruption of the Persians into Georgia, driven as they were from before Gengis-Khan from the frontiers of Khorassan, who slew in Tiflis alone seven thousand Christians. The Capuchin monks, admitted with him to an audience of Gengis-Khan, saw on his throne two Georgian Tsarevitchs, together with the Russian Prince Yaroslav.

In the year 1289 the preachers sent by Pope Nicolas IV. into Georgia met with a favourable reception from the queen, though with no reference whatever to Latinism. They, however, turned their favourable reception by the queen into days of bitter tears and of persecution for the Church ; and they wrung from Rusudana leave to establish in Tiflis an episcopate,⁴ with the bishop Johannes Florentinus, of the order of Preachers, at the head of it.

II. In the year 1400 Tamerlan laid waste Georgia,⁵ acting with the utmost cruelty, and inflicted untold misery on the country, weakened as it had been before his coming by numberless irruptions of Persians and of Tartars. In this instance, however, Georgia had, in certain respects, brought upon herself the thunder of Tamerlan's vengeance, devastation

⁴ In *Annal. Hist. Eccl. Baronii*, vol. xv. pp. 213, 396, mention is made of the deed of hand given by Pope John XXII. to Johannes Florentinus, first Bishop of Tiflis. At the same time the Pope sent pastorals to the king of Georgia and to some of the principal inhabitants.

⁵ *Bandr. Geogr.* vol. ii. p. 299 ; *Rayn. n.* 94 ; *Hist. de Timur-Bec.* by Shefer-eddin, lib. iii. ; *Hist. of Russia of Polev.* vol. v. p. 206, 207.

and rapine, terrible even for Bajazet. Happily, the slaughter did not last long. Tamerlan was obliged to march against Bajazet ; and the Georgians, taking advantage of his departure, sallied from their retreats in woods and in mountains passes, returned to their houses in ruins, and then, when the inhuman Timur buried in the earth four thousand Armenians, whom he had made prisoners after the desperate defence of Sebastopolis, and went into Egypt and Syria, they hastened to sow their fields and to commit to the earth troops of slaughtered brethren, in order to prevent a pestilence. This happened during the reign of George VII., king of Georgia.

III. In the midst of afflictions from without and from within, at the time of Timur's invasion, the Church of Iberia not only had no distinguished teachers, but even hardly those that were necessary; wherefore she had either to wait for such help for her confirmation, or to crave and to receive at the hands of the king and of the Catholicos such aid, in this respect, as they could afford. And, in fact, King Alexander I., who afterwards put on the habit of a monk, and his successors, the Catholicos Michael and David, sons of King George, ceased not to

occupy themselves with the restoration of temples and of churches destroyed by the enemy, with the beautifying of monasteries in the wilderness, and with the bringing back to the Church of many who had embraced Islamism. Through their unflinching zeal for the Faith, in the midst of persecution they revived the broken hearts of Christians, whether by their guidance or their advice,⁶ so as even to

⁶ The Turks always showed the Iberians so much preference over other nations, and treated them with so much greater respect, that Georgian pilgrims to the holy places were always exempt from the presents and from the tributes exacted by the Turks from almost all other people. They were allowed to enter Jerusalem armed, and with waving banners and raised standards ; and in the holy city both men and women of Georgia were allowed to carry arms about them. The Turks and the Sultan of Egypt showed so much consideration for Iberians that some of these were allowed to form part of the sultan's body-guard ; and the troop made up from among them by Sultan Selim I. was called Mameluks. With these remarks agrees Bartholomeo de Salignac, tom. 8, cap. 1 :—"Georgiani, quando Hierosolymam eunt perigrinatum, Sultano (Egypto) tributum non solvunt, sed in camelis dromedariis et equis pompaticis venientes, erectis vexillis Hierosolyman ingrediuntur. Horum feminæ et mares armati incedunt. Pileis utuntur, ut Turcæ cubito altis ; Sultanus ac Turcæ valde timent," etc.

draw upon them the notice and respect of their enemies.

IV. The pious king Alexander I. (A.D. 1414—1442), having opposed to persecutions a heart firm and steadfast, restored later the temple of Mtzkhetha,

Even before him, Vincentius Belvacensis wrote of the warlike education of Georgian women :—"Bellicosi sunt homines Mulieres eorum (Georgianorum) equestris ordinis doctæ sunt ad prælium."—Fragm. de Reb. Or. ann. 1260, lib. xxvi. cap. 43. Likewise writes the German traveller Baumgarten, who lived in the xvth century (Itiner. lib. ii. cap. 9). How much were Georgians dreaded by their neighbours, how staunch in their adherence to the Greek Eastern Church, and how devoted to the holy places, may be seen from the counsel of the Armenian Haiton to the Tartars, enemies of the Sultan of Egypt, and from his proposal to the Roman Pontiff, on the occasion of the arming of the West against them, to take Georgians into the ranks of Western warriors, as men both brave and warlike (see Hist. Haith. Arm. cap. lviii. and lix). The firmness of the Georgians in the Christian faith among the enemies of the Gospel, during innumerable and incessant invasions of those foes who laid waste their country and did their utmost to make them bend to the Coran, excited at all times the wonder of the West. Thus writes Michael Neander, who lived at the beginning of the xvth century, in his book *Orbis terræ explicatio* :—"Iberi professionem cælestis doctrinæ inter infinitos quamvis potentissimos hostes, nihilominus hactenus constanter retinere dicuntur."—Vide "*Asia Major*."

which exists at present. During the long years of his reign he did not levy a single tax or tribute on his subjects, he and his princes supporting themselves by the work of their own hands. Having from the first brought together into one kingdom all the scattered principalities, without thinking of the evil consequences of division, he nevertheless divided his kingdom of Georgia,⁷ according to the number of his sons, into the kingdoms of Karthli, of Kakheth, and of Imereth.

V. About that time shone with especial glory King Demetrius, who embraced monasticism, and put on the cowl as simple monk under the name of Damian. He withdrew into the solitary life of a monk with this object in view, to draw by his example other Christians to the same vocation; so that solitudes which had been without inhabitants became gradually peopled with them. That immortal man, in the midst of the arrogance of furious enemies, peaceably sowed the seed of good deeds from his cell,

⁷ This division of the kingdom of Georgia into three portions by King Alexander is a circumstance as yet not proved from history.

until he shone brightly by kindling in the life of his countrymen both piety and zeal for works of faith and the love of God.

Notwithstanding the many efforts of the Mohammedans to turn the whole of Iberia to Islamism, the Church always abode firm in the faith of Christ. Time, that destroyed so many monuments of the faith and of the piety of our fathers, could not shake those divine foundations on which the Church of Christ is immoveably fixed, built as it is on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and adorned with martyrs and teachers.

The gloom of persecutions did not succeed in extinguishing the light of the orthodox faith, which had shone over Iberia for more than a thousand years. Even Colchis,⁸ together with Trapezus, over which ruled the Emperor David Comnenes, being deprived at that time of enlightened pastors, and laid waste by Amyrates, and afterwards by Mohammedans that succeeded them, did lose everything except the faith, from which it could not swerve, even in the years 1454 and 1455, dreadful and disastrous

⁸ Laonic. Chalcocond. de Reb. Turc. lib. ii. viii. and ix.

as they were both for the Church and for the people.⁹

VI. To the persecutions against the Church, as it were, groaning, in 1476, and in the following years under the tyranny and revengefulness of Uzum Hassan, who at that time ruled over Georgia, were added, not once, but often, the efforts made by the Latins to shake the orthodox faith, which had been preserved undefiled for centuries. Their object was firmly to establish in the minds of the Christians of Georgia veneration for the Head of those of the West, a veneration which was to be accomplished by submission to his temporal government. A fresh embassy from King Constantine III. to Pope Alexander VI.¹⁰ was the fruit of the craft and of the

⁹ See Ducae Michaelis Ducae Nepotis Hist. Byz. p. 154, 155, for an account of the irruption of the Turks into Mingrelia and Trapezus in the year 1457. Likewise Laonici Chalcocond. de Reb. Turc. lib. viii. pp. 220, 248; Spanh. in sæc. xv. cap. 12, art. 3; Voyage de Contarini in Bergeret. Fleury L'Hist. Eccles. liv. 118, § 122; Rayn. ad ann. 1496, No. 21 and 22.

¹⁰ Baronii Annal. Hist. Eccl. vol. xv. p. 459. The Pope's missive to Constantine, king of Georgia, is mentioned in the Collection of Popish Bulls; lib. vii. p. 369.

repeated instances of the Romish monks; for the reluctance of the king to yield to the pretensions of the popes of the West is more than probable. To the praise of the Georgian Church must we again remark that both the efforts of heretics and the wiles of preachers of the Western Church were mostly in vain. Neither persecutions such as those set on foot by Pope Eugenius IV.¹¹ against the Georgian

¹¹ There was also present at the Council of Florence, together with Dorotheus, Metropolitan of Trapezus, the Georgian metropolitan Gregorius (*alias* Johannes), and one of the princes of Georgia. The metropolitan Johannes, called Gregorius by Isidore in his description of the Council of Florence, to which he went, seeing the wiles of the West, and the pretensions of the Emperor Palæologus, at the time when it was necessary to sign a decision, escaped secretly from Florence, went to Venice, and thence through Constantinople to Georgia.—Ancient Library, vol. vi. pp. 33—36; Phil. Cyprii. Chron. pp. 288—292, ed. Francf. 1687; Severinus Binius de Concil. tom. iv. p. 411.

In the History of Russia (copy of Nikon), at p. 145, we read :—"The blessed Marcus, Metropolitan of Ephesus, was not associated with them (*i.e.*, with those who signed the Council of Florence) in their vain and dangerous position; neither did the Iberian metropolitan Gregorius, nor Isacius of Tyre, nor Sophronius of Gaza; but they fled from them and out of the city, every one his own way: the king

metropolitan Gregorius and other Georgian grantees, who were present at the Council of Florence, nor the flatteries called forth towards the Christians of the Georgian Church, like those sent by the doctors of Tübingen¹² and Martin Crusius, did not

returned home by land, but Gregorius of Iberia went by sea to his king at Venice, and thus escaped, and returned without having yielded, not fearing the king's threatening, nor his anger.

¹² Phil. Cyprii. sub Patriarch. Jeremia, p. 425, writes as follows :—"Eadem Confessio" (that is, the Confession of Augustin, or of Augsburg) "a Domino Davide Ungnadio, Imperatoris nostri in aulâ Turcico legato Principi Georgianorum Quarquare Atabag vocato, donata est, cum fratre Constantinopoli moraretur. Qui princeps in Ibericam seri Georgianam linguam transferri eam curavit, secumque in regionem suam abduxit," etc. The teachers of Tübingen who persuaded the Vaivode Quarquar to embrace the Confession of Augsburg, in order to propagate the Lutheran faith in Georgia, were Dr. Jacobi-Andrei, Gerlach, Antonius, Sweitzer, and Martin Crusius, Professor at Tübingen. This happened in the year 1576.


We learn from Georgian history that this Quarquar, son of Atabeg Kaikhosrou, became Vaivode of Samtskheth in 1573. In 1580 he fell into the hands of the Turks, and, having embraced Islamism at Constantinople, secured for himself the influence of the Turkish sultans, and received as his hereditary possession the province of Samtskheth, with

succeed in shaking the hold of the orthodox faith of Georgia, nor in inducing the orthodox Georgians to change the faith they had received from the Greeks.

the title of Atabeg. The history of these troublous times for Georgia is told in detail in *Historia sui temporis Jacobi Tuani* ; lib. lxxii.

CHAPTER IX.

Greek Christians seek the protection of the kings of Georgia
—Sad consequences of the fall of the Greek empire
even for Georgia—Embassy of King Alexander I. to
Moscow to request protection for the Church and people
—Views of Shah-Abbas towards Georgia—Embassy of
King Alexander II. to Moscow—Anxiety of the Russian
Theodore Iohannovitch and Boris Godynoff for the
safety of the Georgian Church—Invasion of Georgia by
Shah-Abbas.

S the Turkish power increased in Anatolia, so were the Greeks obliged to seek the protection of the kings of Georgia (A.D. 1490). These retired into the interior of Georgia, and lived there in peace, as long as the iron hand of the Turk was not raised to exterminate the Christian faith, even in the kingdom of Georgia,

bordering on that in which they now had to seek their future destiny. Until the year 1827 the Greeks always had a special bishop of their own, under the name of Akhtalic, so called from the small place Akhtal,^a to the south of Tiflis, where they took their abode. The last of them was Joachim, who died in Georgia in 1827; their eparchy, however, was subject to the Catholicos of Georgia.

The fall of the Greek empire had woeful consequences for the orthodoxy of Iberia; for the Greek emperors had always protected the Lazes, the Colchians, the Suani, and all the inhabitants of Georgia against the Persians and the Turks, sworn enemies of Christian Iberia. From the taking of Constantinople, and the increase of Turkish power in Asia Minor, the Iberian Church lost her protectors, and the inhabitants of Akhaltsikhé, and of other districts to the west of it, were obliged to become Mahomedans.

^a Akhtala is a small town in Shignith-Sakhéti, or Inner Sakhét, where there is a remarkable well of bitumen.—Wakh Gheoghr. p. 314.

Imereth, and the lower parts of Karthalinia and of Kakheth, remained faithful to the Gospel, and suffered for the Cross. The only resource then left was to trust in God and in the orthodox Church of Russia (A.D. 1492). The king of Kakheth, Alexander I.,¹ sent messengers to the Tzar John III., deploring the persecutions to which his people were subject, the devastation of the country, the churches in ruins, the ignorance and degraded state of the clergy in those barbarous times, and the seditions and murders in the midst of Christian civilization. Alexander, addressing John III. as the hope of Christians, as the support of the poor, and as the zealous votary of S. Nicolas, begged of him help and protection ; but circumstances prevented the Russian Tzar from becoming at that time the protector of this oppressed Church. The Turks breathed vengeance against the Iberians, and ceased not to urge the pasha of Anatolia to fall upon them, to take their land, and to turn them to Islamism. Unfortunately, internal discord became as it were the cause for which fire and sword laid waste the whole

¹ Hist. of the Emp. of Russia, by Karamzin, vol. vi. 230.

of Georgia, now at the hands of the Persians and then at those of the Turks. Iberia sighed and lost all spirit; her enemies did all that might be expected from barbarous times and from the rule of war of those days, which was to sanction by law every kind of evil in an enemy's country without defender or protector on either side. The pastors of the Church were silent; the kings, afraid of the resentment of powerful neighbours, could take no effectual measures for the defence of oppressed Christianity;² schools were closed; God's Word was hardly remembered in secret, in the feelings and in the hearts of believers weighed down and afflicted, and but seldom heard in churches then in ruins. Priests on their way into Georgia, visiting from curiosity churches standing apart and in solitudes, found in many of them only remains of rich offerings of former times. King Alexander, having explained to them the cause of this desolation,

² Johannis Leunclav. Supplem. Annal. Turcic. pp. 354, 375; Pandectæ Hist. Turcic. cap. 254. Therein are described the violence of the Turks and the government of Beglarbek, established in Tiflis, in Mingrelia, Guria, and in all Georgia, with all the overbearing conduct of the Turkish pashas.

attributed it to the division of Iberia into principalities. "We are surrounded," said he, "by unbelievers; but we still praise the true God."

IV. At last came a new and strange season of trial for the Georgian Church. Oppressed by internal discord, and by the dissensions of ambitious and unsettled princes, Georgia was again exposed to a severe persecution on the part of the Persians. These enemies of the Christian name ceased not to lay their sacrilegious hands on the riches of Iberia. The messengers of King Alexander to Moscow lamented the fearful misfortunes of their country, and represented how the great Shah-Abbas, having endeavoured to leave to himself the protection of the kingdom of Georgia, made in reality the Georgians enemies of the Russian Tzar.

V. In the year 1587 King Alexander II., having declared himself a vassal of Russia, sent to Moscow the priests Joachim, Cyril, and others;^{*} and, pressed on all sides as he was by the Persians and the Turks, entreated with tears the Russian Tzar Theodore Iohannovitch to take Iberia under

^{*} Karamzin, Russian Emp. vol. x. p. 63.

his protection, and thus to rescue her from the grasp of infidels. "The present disastrous times," wrote he, "for the Christian faith were foreseen by many men inspired of God.⁴ We, brethren of the same faith with Russians, groan under the hand of wicked men. Thou, crowned head of the orthodox faith, canst alone save both our lives and our souls. I bow to thee with my face to the earth, with all my people, and we shall be thine for ever." The Tzar Theodore Iohannovitch having taken Iberia under his protection, busied himself earnestly in rendering her assistance and in works of faith. He sent into Georgia teachers in holy orders for the regulation of Church ceremonies, and painters to decorate the temples with images of saints; and Lob, patriarch of all the Russias, addressed to the Georgian king a letter touching the faith. King Alexander humbly replied that the favourable answer of the Tzar had fallen upon him from Heaven,

⁴ Among such fathers, the reverend Father Arsenius is remarkable for his having foretold the miseries of the irruption of Shah-Abbas. His bones rest in the solitude of Davido-Garedj.

had brought him out of darkness into light; that the clergy of the Russian Church were angels for the clergy of Iberia, buried in ignorance. The Prince Zvenigorod, ambassador to Georgia, promised in the name of Russia the freedom of all Georgia, and the restoration of all her churches and monasteries.

Notwithstanding the promise of help on the part of Russia made by Theodore Iohannovitch, and reiterated by his successor, Boris Godynoff (A.D. 1594), the fear of vengeance from Persia was so great among the Iberians that King Alexander, who still called himself a vassal of Russia, was obliged to go to war with Persia. The words uttered by Alexander's son George in presence of the Russian ambassador Tatitcheff, and the words of the Iberian messengers to the boyars, show the terror caused by the circumstances of that time. "Never," said George—"never did Iberia suffer more woefully than at present: we are under the feet of the Sultans and of the Shah; and both long to drink our blood and to take all we have. We have given ourselves of our own accord to Russia; let Russia, then, receive us with deeds, and not with words.

It is no time for delay ; soon there will not be one man left to embrace the Cross with useless attachment to the only sovereign that can defend it. He may save us. Turks, Persians, Kumiks, rush upon us on all sides ; and we call to you most humbly. Come and save us. We wail on account of the infidels, and therefore have we given ourselves up with our heads to the orthodox Tzar, that he may protect us ; but at present we weep over our homes, our churches, and our monasteries in ruins—our children in captivity, our shoulders under the yoke.”

VI. On the 7th of October, 1604, dawned the resurrection of Georgia, and of her ancient glory. But her future happiness required of her yet other, if not greater, sacrifices. The Tzarevitch Constantine, who had embraced the Mahomedan religion in Persia after renouncing the faith of his ancestors, showed himself an enemy by murdering his father Alexander and his brother. The chief men of the state, fearing the Mahomedan king, but encouraged by the envoys from Russia, required a Christian king. At last the uneasiness and agitation of the people were allayed only by Tatitcheff's notification

that the king might only be a Christian, and by the will of Tzar Boris Godynoff that he would deliver Iberia from Mahomedan thralldom.

Shah-Abbas, having won victories everywhere during his long reign, whether by main force or through cunning, became an object of terror, an impending ruin and desolation to the whole kingdom of Georgia. Every successive exaction of his from Georgia was made to fill the treasury of Persia, to reduce the Christian faith to a lower and lower state, and to establish the law of the Coran. Seeing that the native kings and princes were in no hurry to bow the knee before him, he thundered against Georgia, treading under foot everything on his way to Tiflis, bathing everything in blood, reducing to ashes towns, villages, churches, and monasteries. He showed himself a ferocious and proud man, and constrained all to lay down their arms. The Christians of Georgia, feeling no confidence in their strength for the war, put their whole trust in God. The churches and the monasteries were filled with earnest supplicants; fasts were proclaimed, and processions with the cross formed in various places; all confessed their sins and wept over them, heark-

ened to the instructions of their pastors, and, preparing for death, partook of the Holy Sacrament. Shah-Abbas, having gathered together in churches Christians faithful to the Gospel, burned them by thousands. Even the bones of saints and of other champions for the Faith were not left to rest in the earth, to which they had been committed in hope of the resurrection. Yet, for all that, Christianity was not weakened in Georgia; the faith which always triumphs over troubles and difficulties shone yet brighter among Georgians through them all.

At last Shah-Abbas, having slaked his thirst for blood, began to feel God's hand heavy on him. Historians relate that many Persians, when rushing into temples to plunder them, were struck with blindness, and that others, witnessing the wonders wrought by the power of Christ, turned Christians. Shah-Abbas himself could not demolish God's spiritual building, against which the power of hell cannot prevail, being terrified at strange rumours concerning his army, which took to admiring Christianity and to wonder at it; as well as at evident interpositions of God's providence in favour of his servants. He showed

his feeling of dread by the restitution of images of the Assumption of the B. V. Mary, and of the most Holy Trinity, that wrought miracles, brought, among other spoils, from a monastery built by Queen Tamar upon a high mountain among the defiles of Ksais^b and of Aragv, and by the image of S. Eustathius, sent as a present into Karthalinia; by offering the valuable hilt of his sword, and by other gifts in acknowledgment of the Christian courage and valour of the Georgians.

^b Karamzin, Russian Emp. vol. xi. p. 59.

CHAPTER X.

Glorious martyrs and other remarkable persons in defence and support of the Church—Desolate state of Georgia—Embassy of King Theimuraz I. to Moscow—Georgian kings who embraced Islamism sit on the Christian throne of the kingdom—The Metropolitan of Georgia is present at the Council of Moscow, called together against Nikon.



ACTIVE historians relate with honour the tale of misfortunes that befel Georgia in the xvth and xviith centuries. Kings and grandees of the realm, who had experienced the vanity of the world, and who, during the whole course of their life, had not seen the happy days of a Church at peace, put on the cowl, and became pastors of the people, in order that, by setting the example of Christian devotedness, they

might contribute towards the consolation of the Church, then in despair of either rest or peace. Among such we may single out—

1. *Simeon* (A.D. 1532), Tzarevitch of Imereth, and Bishop of Bitchvinta (Pitiyunta).

2. *Malachi* (A.D. 1582), Catholicos of Ap'hkhazia and of Imereth, of the princely race of the Abashides.

3. *Melchizedek* (A.D. 1591), Bishop of Gaetan, son of the Tzarevitch Bagrat.

4. *David* (A.D. 1592), Tzarevitch of Georgia, who became a monk and lived in the solitude of a narrow cell as simple monk.

5. *Georgius* (A.D. 1594), Tzarevitch of Karthalinia, named *Gerasim* among his order.

6. *Bagrat*, brother of King David, called *Barnabas* among his order.

7. *Luarsab*, king of Karthalinia, named the "Gideon of Iberia" for his giving peace to the Church, both within and without, and called "saint" by reason of his devotion and piety.

Others likewise sealed with their martyrdom, in presence of the people, the truth of their faith. Such were—

1. *Theodorus*, priest of Manglis.*
2. *Georgius*, king of Karthalinia, poisoned by the Persians.
3. *Simeon* (A.D. 1619—1629), also king of Karthalinia, son of Luarsab, who, after being prisoner at Constantinople, was put to death by poisoning.
4. *Luarsab* II. (A.D. 1603—1616), king of Karthalinia, who was strangled for his confession of the name of Christ in presence of the Shah of Persia. The Iberian Church celebrates his feast on the 21st of June.
5. *Ketevan* (A.D. 1624),¹ queen of Kakheth, who

* Manglis is a town of Karthli, with a beautiful church that has never been injured, built by Constantine. The Osmanlis are said to have respected it on account of what they took to be Mahomet riding on a lion, painted on the ceiling of the church. Wakhtang Gurgaslan made it a bishopric, whose bishop rules over the country beyond the river Ktsia, as far as the Trialet. —Wakh. p. 170.

¹ The biography of Queen Ketevan and her martyrdom was published in Paris in 1833, at the expense of the Asiatic Society. Her heroic endurance of the most cruel torture was witnessed by Catholic monks of the Augustine order (Appam. in Annal. 1617, n. 9; Wisel. Med. Hist. Sept. III). Therein also do we read in detail the persecutions of the Georgian Church under Shah-Abbas. A short

suffered the most cruel martyrdom for her firmness in the Christian faith, on the arrival of Shah-Abbas into Georgia. The Church commemorates her death on the 14th of September.

Those who followed the example of these kings and great men of the state in their piety and in their zeal for the Faith are mentioned by historians in such number that the Catholicos Antoni, in his praise of the glory of martyrdom, compares them to an host, armed and fighting against the world and the devil, and dying solemnly for the Faith like victorious men. One irruption of Tamerlan cost the Iberian Church 300,000 of her sons. In towns and villages, and in mountain passes, formerly teeming with population, there remain only faint traces of the former inhabitants. The traveller through Georgia sees only stone foundations of churches, ruined walls, the ruins of houses, scattered fragments of the images of saints and of crosses. This spectacle meets him in general in

account of them may also be seen in Fleuri's Hist. of his own Church ; vol. lv. p. 694, Latin ed. Her martyrdom has also been sung in Georgian in the verses of Prince Dimitri Bagration.

the western and southern districts of Iberia, which they call Samkheth. Mountain recesses, the abodes of pious anchorites, on steep and rugged rocks, like bird's nests, innumerable as they are in Georgia, show proof of Christian self-denial. On seeing those places one cannot help feeling surprised; and, involuntarily despising the pride of life and the vanity of the world, while admiring the beauty of the scenery, one is led to cherish inward veneration for those indefatigable pioneers of faith and piety.

II. Meanwhile risings of the nation and the storms of war crippled the efforts of the Church of Georgia, by depriving the country of her best province of Samtskhé. This was accomplished by the Turkish arms, under King George, who was poisoned by order of the Shah of Persia because he would not embrace the religion of Mahomet. The upper parts of Karthalinia and of Djavakheth, taken by force by the conquering hordes of Turks, in the very midst of the provinces of Georgia, fell away from the Faith, and turned to Islamism; and the churches of orthodox Georgians were closed.

The king of Kakheth, Theimuraz I., grandson of the murdered king, Alexander I., sent, in 1619,

Igumene Chariton as ambassador to the Russian Tzar Michael Theodorovitch,³ with the urgent and humble request that his lordship would have pity on his fellow-Christians, bound to him by the same faith, to take his part and to protect them from the persecutions of Shah-Abbas of Persia, from whom he had hidden himself in Bashitshina, a province of Dadian. He also entreated the Russian sovereign to intercede with the Shah for the release of his mother and of his two sons, Leon and Alexander, whom the Shah had taken captive. In his letter to King Theimuraz, he represented his wretched condition in these words: "Our tears and our miserable estate show you, O exalted sovereign, that our light is turned into gloom, that our sun no longer warms us, that our moon no more gives her light, and that our bright day is turned into night. For my part, I am come to this, that I wish I never were born rather than see the orthodox faith destroyed, the land of Iberia laid waste before my

³ This name, and those of other persons sent on that embassy, are mentioned in the register of the synod, printed with the service-book of the Patriarch Ioasaph in 1668.

eyes, and the name of God no longer praised in our churches." The conquest of Georgia by an orthodox and powerful nation was more agreeable to her people than their bondage to Mahomedans. It was welcome by the whole of Georgia—that is, by Karthalinia, by Kakheth, by Imereth, and even by the reigning prince Dadian. Russia, on her side, did all she could: she chastised the prince of Daghesthan, who kept Georgia in constant alarm through his incursions; and, for the time, gave rest to the country by making peace with Persia.

III. But Georgia, which, despite all the invasions of the Turks and of the Persians, had succeeded in keeping the Faith inviolate, had nevertheless to undergo yet greater misfortunes. The Shahs of Persia, taking advantage of the troubled times of Georgia, broken up, as it were, into bits, laid their bloody hands upon her on all sides, and determined to make every effort to turn her to their own creed. The people, weakened, reduced to beggary, and panic-struck, appeared to the Persians to be in a state ready to embrace Islamism, and thus also, and once for all, to receive the Persian yoke.

Wherefore the politics of the Persian court were, with its usual vigilance, directed to this, whether by threats or by flatteries, to bring to Islamism, if not actually the people of Georgia, at least her kings.

The Persians succeeded in this; and Rostom, Tzarevitch of Georgia, who was brought up in Persia, and who embraced Islamism, mounted the throne of Karthalinia in 1634, bringing with him every kind of vice (A.D. 1634—1658). Ashamed neither of his own disgraceful apostasy from the Christian faith, nor yet of his years—he was then sixty-seven—he enforced the Mahomedan religion in his dominions, and oppressed his subjects, obliging them, especially in the first year of his reign, to renounce Christianity. He showed his unworthy zeal for Islamism, especially in his dealings with the Catholicos Endemon. This man, imprisoned in spite of his old age, but despising the threats of the king, ceased not night and day by prayers and and with tears to exhort the wailing nation, and the pastors thereof, to abide faithful to the faith of their fathers; but Rostom ordered him to be thrown down the highest rock in Tiflis, from a

height of upwards of three hundred feet. On the other hand, Rostom's queen, Maria, protected the Church to the utmost of her power.

IV. To Rostom succeeded his adopted son, Wakh-tang (A.D. 1658—1675), also a Mahomedan, who changed his name to that of Shahnabaz. The first years of his reign were also hard and heavy for his Christian subjects, but afterwards he favoured them, albeit in secret; and, in all the good he did for the Church, he always acted through his twin brother Domentius, whom he had himself appointed Catholicos of Iberia. After the melancholy martyrdom of this king (A.D. 1676—1688), his son George mounted the throne of Iberia, having embraced the Mahomedan faith, even after his father, by constraint of Shah-Abbas II. of Persia. Having, like his father, shown favour to Christianity through the Catholicos Nicolai, of the princely house of the Amilakhvors, he did as much good as the Tzarevitch Heraclius, called among Mahomedans Nazaralikhan, who after him occupied the throne through intrigue, did evil. The first act of Heraclius was to depose the Catholicos Nicolai; after which followed sundry other alterations in the

government of the state, evidently to the injury of the Church.

Faithful pastors of the Church, however, ceased not, in the midst of troubles, seditions, and persecutions, to teach the true Faith with care and earnestness. So much so that, at the invitation of the Patriarchs Paicius of Alexandria and Macarius of Antioch, called to Moscow by the Tzar Alexis Michaelovitch in the year 1665, to the synod held against Nikon,³ were also present the Georgian Metropolitan Epiphanius, with Philotheon of Trapezus, and the Georgian Archimandrite Pachomius. Among the happy results of that synod for Georgia were the reconstruction of the hierarchy, and bright examples of holy life among the clergy, among men of the world, and among all members of the Church in general.

V. At last, in the year 1701, Wakhtang VI. sat on the throne of Georgia; he was a sovereign who feared God, a zealous Christian, a wise and prudent politician. He secured the happiness of Georgia by enacting laws which to this day go by the name of

³ And also near the end of the book.

the Code of King Wakhtang.⁴ These laws, founded

⁴ This Code is divided into eight parts, and contains the following laws :—

1. *Laws of King Wakhtang VI.*, framed by himself on the foundation of the Greek Procheirons, in combination with local laws. They contain 276 articles.

2. *The Greek Laws*, which consist of 420 articles, borrowed from the ordinances and decrees framed by the Greek emperors Leon Mudri (A.D. 886—911), Alexander and Constantinus VI. Porphyrogenetes (A.D. 912—919). These laws were introduced into Georgia at the request of King Wakhtang by Eastern patriarchs.

3. *The Armenian Laws*, which consist of 431 articles. They are an extract from the laws of ancient Armenia, found in the temple of Estchmiadzin, capital of the Armeno-Gregorian Christians.

4. *The Laws of King George VI.*, who reigned in Georgia from 1318 to 1346 ; they consist of 46 articles.

5. *The Laws of Agbug*, of the Atabek of Samtzheth, written in 1446, on the foundation of former ordinances left him by his uncle Atabek Beka, who ruled over the province of Atabeg from 1361 to 1391. They consist of 176 articles.

6. *The Laws of Moses*, drawn from the Bible ; in number 52.

7. *The Laws of the Catholicos*, written by the Iberian Catholicos Eudemus II., in the year 1667. They are 24 in number. They are a selection from the Greek Nomocanon.

The shortness of these laws does not prove the non-existence in Georgia of other laws, properly ecclesiastical. For there was in Georgia, besides a short Nomocanon

on religion, allayed warlike passions, and set limits

printed with the service-books, a complete Nomocanon of the Sixth Œcumenic Council, by S. John Postnik, and a full set of ordinances or decrees of the Council of Trull, once in possession of the Emperor Constantine, grandson of the Emperor Heraclius. To these we may add the Procheiron of King Leon the Wise and of Constantine ; the questions and answers of Timotheus, Archbishop of Constantinople ; the account of the Seventh Œcumenic Council ; also the Rolay Books (Basilicon) of the Emperor Basilius of Macedon (A.D. 767—886), and portions of the Nomocanon of Johannes Scholasticus, and of the Patriarch Photius, translated into Georgian by Euphemius Sviatovorets, who died on Mt. Athos about A.D. 1020, and others. The ancient MS. of this Nomocanon, written in the year 1350, on parchment, in ecclesiastical characters, is now deposited in St. Petersburg, in the Imperial Academy of Sciences. It was discovered in Vologda by the Archeologue P.M. Stroeve ; it wants the beginning, the end, and a few pages : size, 4to ; pages, in all 190.—Apart from this Nomocanon, there are in Georgian books of degrees of kindred, and two other Nomocanons, different both as to matter and volume. Some few cursory remarks on this book are found in *Historical Review of the Nomocanons* by Rosenkampf, pp. 497—516.

8. *Local Customs*, that have the force of laws, and which exist in Georgia by tradition. These ordinances, put down in writing by King Wakhtang, contain 74 articles.

This Code of Wakhtang was translated from the Georgian into Russian, and printed, in 1837, at the Senate Press, in St. Petersburg.

to the love of war of the peoples inhabiting Georgia. When once on the throne he reinstated the Catholicos Nicolai, who had been deposed by Heraclius, into the dignity of his office ; for he was a man renowned in his time both as theologian and as philosopher ; and after the death of Nicolai, Wakhtang intrusted the chair of Catholicos to his brother, Domentius III.

The Church, which had hitherto been troubled by the wars with the Turks and by the internal dissensions of the kingdom, found rest and experienced happier days under the sceptre of Wakhtang, though not for long. Among his deeds in behalf of the Church were the building of new temples and the restoration of many that were dilapidated ; the calling together of a synod for the purpose of the establishment of the orthodox Faith in all respects in harmony with the Greek and the Russian Churches ; the institution and regulation of Church discipline ; the restoration of monasteries and of hermitages that were celebrated for their ancient foundations ; his bringing a printing-press to Tiflis,⁵

⁵ By command of Wakhtang the following books were

and the publication of books of devotion and for Divine service, all of which may yet be procured easily for use in churches and for edification at home. He opened schools, generally in connection with monasteries, wherein children of the best families were taught for the most part the Holy Scriptures and Philosophy, after the scholastic method of those days; he sanctioned and confirmed the revenues given by former kings to monasteries and to hermitages, and he secured sufficient maintenance to those that were not adequately endowed.⁶ At that

also printed :—the Gospel, the Apostles, the Psalter, the Service-Book, a breviary, a Book of Prayers, and an Akathist to the B. V. Mary. This last is printed in the civil character.

⁶ Constantinus Porphyrog., in his treatise *De Adm. Imp. seu Antiq. Constant.* pars ii. cap. xlv, bears witness to the primitive zeal of the kings and of the people of Georgia for Christian devotion, and to their readiness to send offerings to Jerusalem. The Armenian Haïtun also, in offering to Pope Clement V. advantageous measures for an expedition against the Sultan of Egypt, who persecuted Christianity, speaks of the kings of Georgia as of the most devoted of all Christians that worshipped at our Saviour's sepulchre, and withal most warlike. "Sunt enim," says he, "devotissimi Christiani et potentes et multi, atque strenui bellatores." *Hist. Orient.* cap. lviii.

time monasteries were everywhere abodes of science and centres of civilization and of enlightenment for the country. The Georgian Church, which flourished during his reign, so soon enriched herself that, in a very short time, she was able to send valuable offerings to the monasteries of Mt. Athos and to others, elsewhere in Greece.⁷ Historians relate that

⁷ The Greek monasteries, founded by deeds granted by kings of Georgia, own to this day labourers, vineyards, gardens, and lands in Georgia. Their archimandrites, who worthily administered their churches in Georgia, built conventual houses and churches, of which some are still in existence, while others are in ruins, or were left uncared for during the troubles of the country. Such are the following :— (1) a church dedicated to the Holy Cross in Tiflis, under the administration of an archimandrite of the Patriarch of Jerusalem (the present (1843) Patriarch of Jerusalem, Athanasius, was archimandrite in Georgia until the year 1803); (2) a church dedicated to S. Catherine, martyr, connected with the monastery on Mt. Sinai; (3) a church dedicated to the B. V. Mary, in the village of Dirba, under the administration of an archimandrite of the Patriarch of Jerusalem; (4) a church dedicated to S. Catherine, martyr, in the village of Megreba; (5) a church dedicated to the B. V. Mary of Iberia, managed by an archimandrite of Mt. Athos; (6) another dedicated to the thaumaturge Nicolas, on the mountains of Khodash, now vacant; (7) a church dedicated to the Annunciation of the B. V. Mary, in connection with the monastery of Cyprus;

Wakhtang sent to Jerusalem, as an offering to the Holy Sepulchre, the sum—a very large one for those days—of 2000 tumans (or 20,000 roubles); and he received for that a number of bones and of wonder-working images, copies of the B. V. Mary of Okona,^b which has long been feasted on the 30th of July. This image was at first discovered in the monastery Gaenat, afterwards brought into Russia, and is now found in possession of the Georgian princes, descendants of King Wakhtang VI., in the village of Liskova, of the government of Nijegorod.

(8) there are two churches in Imereth, managed by two Greek archimandrites.

All those churches possess in Georgia and in Imereth labourers, villages, arable lands and forests, vineyards and gardens, and some of them houses and monasteries in Tiflis.

^b Okona, celebrated convent in the Karthli, north of the Kur, between the river Phtza and Nulis-Tsqali, in a delightful neighbourhood.—Wakh. Gheoghr. p. 264.

CHAPTER XI.

King Iesse—Catholicos Domentius—Bondage of Georgia under the Turks—Assistance given to Georgia by Nadir-Shah—Deeds of the Georgian emperor Solomon I.—Deeds of Heraclius II. in behalf of the Church—Efforts of Western missionaries in Georgia, and banishment of the Catholicos Antoni I. into Russia—Men who helped the Church, either by their life or by their knowledge.

BY a misfortune, which, however, did not last long for the Church, Wakhtang, fearing the vengeance of the Shah of Persia, and moved by other political considerations, was obliged to abdicate the throne, to go into Russia, and, to his great grief, to see sitting on his own throne, even at the time

of his departure, Iesse,¹ who welcomed Islamism into Georgia from the Turks. Mounted on the throne, that apostate brought with him every kind of vice taught by the laws of the false prophet. The Catholicos Domentius and John Saakadze, superior of the hermitage of Davido-Garedj, unwilling and unable to endure the horrors and the lawlessness of those unhappy times, helped to unmask the real intentions of the Mahomedan king then sitting on the Christian throne of Georgia, which were to destroy, by his example, the good results of Christian temperance and self-denial among his Christian subjects. By so doing he armed against himself the pastors of the Church. When they exposed him, he excused himself by the religion which he professed ; so that it only remained for the Christians to pray that those dangerous and disastrous days for the Church might be shortened ; and soon God's providence put an end to the sensual life of that ungodly king by a most horrible death.

¹ Father of the Catholicos Antoni I., celebrated for his intellect and for his works.

II. To the sad circumstances of those troublous times was added another great misfortune for the Church : an irruption into Georgia of the Persians, who laid her waste and carried off with them some of her people captive, and a quantity of spoil. No sooner had the invading hordes of Persia quitted her borders than Georgia was again, from 1723 to 1731, subjected to the bondage of the Turks, who succeeded in establishing their power, by giving to the country a pasha, whose residence was in Tiflis.

This fresh servitude of Georgia was the more onerous, as the Persians, by no means inclined to yield to the Turks, made incessant incursions, every one of which laid waste the land and deprived it of inhabitants. Every fresh arming of the Turks required funds for the maintenance of the war, to say nothing of the taxes continually levied, not only on the people, but even on bishops and on monasteries. This time of bondage cost the Church many of her sons ; nevertheless, many Georgians showed themselves strong in the Faith, and by their firmness excited the wonder even of the enemies of the Cross of Christ. The Catho-

licos Domentius ventured to appear at Constantinople before the Sultan, and to plead for the liberty, the peace, and the prosperity of the Church. Unfortunately, however, his pleading did not produce any great result. Through the pasha's artifice Domentius was put in prison on one of the islands of Greece; and in his chair was placed a sacrilegious individual who had bought of the pasha the Episcopate; an office that cannot be purchased. The Catholicos Domentius remained in exile until the death of this usurper of his chair. This dreadful trial for the Church, which lasted until 1744, was put an end to by the Georgian kings Theimuraz and Heraclius, who reigned at one and the same time in Karthalinia and in Kakheth.

III. About this time Nadir-Shah, remarkable for his opposition to the exploits of King Heraclius II. (A.D. 1736—1747), for faithful service in the expedition to India, supplied him with troops which enabled him to drive away the Turks from the borders of Iberia. Meanwhile, no sooner did the Church seem to rest and to be free from the yoke of the Turks than a terrible foe appeared in

Nadir-Shah himself. Apparently he favoured the Church, then expiring and oppressed ; but, feigning himself a protector of the people, he prepared a greater evil for the Church, and a yoke heavier than that of the Turks. The king of Kakheth, Theimuraz II., while bound to this pretended liberator, soon found that his pity was as dangerous for Iberia as even his hatred could be. He found no other means of assistance for his country than, quitting Georgia, to go himself in person and lay the request of his whole people before the throne of Russia, that was of the same faith with him, and there to sue for help to the tottering kingdom and to its oppressed Christianity. Theimuraz II. (A.D. 1762), starting for Russia, adjured all the nation in the porch of the temple to defend the Christian Faith, attacked by Turks and Persians ; he presented to the clergy and to the people his grandson Prince George, then only twelve years old, girt on him his sword, blessed him with the Cross that gives us life, and proclaimed him king of Karthalinia, under the protection of his son Heraclius II., king of Kakheth.

Heraclius (A.D. 1762—1796), being left king of

the kingdoms of Kakheth and of Karthalinia, which had hitherto been separate, turned his attention to the internal condition of his kingdom, and for a time procured rest for the Church. Tumults and dissensions, that burst out in Persia, through the ambition of men aspiring to the throne, gave him an opportunity of encouraging the Christians in works of faith and piety, and of confirming the faith and good works among the people. During a short time of peace he brought a printing-press to Tiflis, and printed Church books; such as Octoichos, the Flower triodon, the Lent triodon, the Gospel, the Book of Psalms, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles; the Ritual, the Missal, the Book of Prayers, the Book of Hours, and an Akathist to the B. V. Mary.

IV. Meanwhile Imereth was exposed to great dangers on the part of the Turks, from whom that country was suffering as much as Georgia had hitherto suffered from the Persians. A multitude of Christians perished by the sword of the votaries of the Coran, and others inclined still more to the Mahomedan faith. Soon, may be, even the memory of Christianity would have disappeared, as it had

done among the Ap'hkhazes and the Lazes, had not the Russian army hastened to the rescue. By the help of these the Turkish army was driven from the frontiers of Imereth, of Guria, and of Mingrelia ; and King Solomon I., who had hitherto concealed himself among the mountains, returned to his people. By the treaty of 1774, between Russia and the Turks, in which Mingrelia alone was ceded to them, the shameful tribute paid to the Sultan in girls and boys was put an end to. King Heraclius II. obtained the same results in his relations with Persia.

V. King Solomon I. (A.D. 1763—1782), who confirmed the Christian faith in Imereth, and who for that reason is justly called by historians "the light of Christianity and the support of piety," occupied himself with the destruction of one custom that recalled the times and the spirit of barbarism ; namely, that of selling prisoners to captivity in Turkey. And, in order that it should rest on the conscience of his subjects, he made it the subject of a synod that branded with anathema every one who would not assent to the wishes of the king, and obey him and the commandments of God.

The fear of that sentence disturbed the conscience of the Christians of Imereth, and this measure not only did not remain fruitless, but even yielded considerable advantages to the Church and to the kingdom, by teaching the people to respect the sacredness of the king's crown, and to cherish obedience to religion and to the laws of the land. Solomon I., by reason of all the good he bestowed on his orthodox kingdom, won for himself the special title of Solomon the Great.

VI. But, for all that, the persecutions of the Church did not become less. The Western Church, which more than once attempted to destroy the orthodox faith, continued, in those trying and troublous times, to disturb the peace of the Georgian Church. Already, from the year 1625, Roman missionaries of the order of Theatine got a footing in Iberia; and the kings, as well as the people, finding among them clever physicians and intelligent men, treated them with kindness. The head of this mission, Avitavolis,² rejoiced, in 1631, the Pope Urban VIII.

² See Clement Galland Conciliat. de l'Egl. Armén. avec l'Eglise de Rome. He notices the letter of the king of

with the report of the small results of his mission ; to which may be ascribed the union of many Armenians with the Latin Church. After them came monks of the Capucin order, who succeeded in perverting not only many Armenians, but also Georgians in Tiflis, in Guria, in Kitais, in Mingrelia, and, above all, in Akhaltsikhé, still under the power of the Turks, by promising them peace and salvation in the bosom of the Roman Church.

At first the kings of Georgia did not feel any diffidence towards these teachers from the Western Church, but made use of them as of learned men for the improvement of elementary teaching in their dominions ; and the Catholicos Antoni I., who found them useful instruments to enlighten Georgia, fell himself a sacrifice to their wiles. The king heard with grief of the intention

Georgia to the Pope Urban VIII., written in the year 1629, together with the Pope's answer. Likewise the Pope's missive to the Catholicos of Georgia, Zacharias (called "Metropolitan" in the letter), and the Catholicos' reply. In the missive to that Catholicos, given by Leo Allatius, lib. iii. de contes. cap. 9, n. 1, Zacharias calls himself outright Catholicos of all Georgia : "Qui suum universæ hujus regionis, pater magnus totius Gurgaslan Catholicus Zacharias," etc.

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of the Catholicos to abandon the orthodox faith. He called together a Synod, and by its decision Antoni had the choice given him of either quitting Georgia or of abdicating his office of Catholicos. Antoni left Georgia in 1755, placing himself under the protection of the Holy Synod of all the Russias, and submitted to the inquiry thereof his confession of faith, which was found in every respect conformable to the orthodox Greek faith; then, by permission of the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, the vacant eparchy, or diocese, of Vladimirsk was given him with the title of archbishop, which he filled since the 27th November, 1759. In the course of time he was brought back to Georgia, and reinstated into his office of Catholicos, when he showed himself a zealous promoter of the orthodox faith.

VII. The king and the pastors of the Church, having by these means sown the seeds of the errors of the Western Church, afterwards did their utmost, whether by rules of piety or by powerful refutations, to maintain the integrity of the orthodox faith and the purity of the Græco-Eastern Church. Among these we may especially notice—

(1) *Zacharias* (A.D. 1617), Catholicos of Georgia, who wrote a history of his times.

(2) The Catholicos *Nicolai* (A.D. 1710), a native of Imereth, who wrote an exposition of Holy Scripture, and a history of the Church. For the sake of his faith he endured the loss of his office and exile, which he rendered yet more glorious by his magnanimous endurance of the wrath of the king.

(3) *Gideon*, Archbishop of Ishkhnisk, who was confirmed in his office by the Turkish Sultan.

(4) *Gregorius*, Archbishop of Mtskhetha, who took part in the compilation of the code of Wakhtang.

(5) *Vissarion* (A.D. 1724), Catholicos of Georgia, historian, theologian, and singular for his knowledge and rich endowments. He wrote much in refutation of Armenians and of Catholics; sacred songs in praise of saints celebrated in Georgia, and for the festival of Our Saviour's Coat. Many of these hymns were lost, and others are still sung in the Church.

(6) *Domentius III.* (A.D. 1703), Catholicos, collected the accounts of the lives of the saints of the

Greek Church. He also wrote descriptions of the events of his time.

(7) *Macrina* (A.D. 1658), sister of King Theimuraz I., wrote hymns in praise of the saints of Georgia, which are still in use in the Church.

(8) *Antoni* (A.D. 1662), Archbishop of Tiflis, mentioned by the Russian traveller Arsenius Sukhanoff.³

(9) *Josephi* (A.D. 1702), Archbishop of Tiflis, known by his spiritual writings and meditations. Men of his time called him the Philosopher.

(10) *Eudemon* (A.D. 1662), Catholicos of Ap'h-khazia, framed canons known by the name of Catholicos.

(11) **Arsenius* of Nicotsminda (A.D. 1682), theologian and philosopher, wrote an exposition of Holy Scripture. The purity of his thoughts, his simple conversation, and his saintly life won for him the title of Arsenius the Angelic.

(12) *Jacob I.* of Imereth (A.D. 1712), visited the holy places of Palestine. His writings are preserved in manuscript in the monastery of Gaenat.

³ In his book *Proskinitarii* (προσκυνητήριον).

(13) *Michael* (A.D. 1724), of the court of the chief priest (Protoiereus), wrote books during the reign of Wakhtang VI.

(14) *Nicolai* of Mrovelsk (A.D. 1742), bishop, who came after the Archbishop of Tiflis, published books for Divine service in Tiflis.

(15) *Joseph* (A.D. 1742), archbishop, known by the name of Samebeli, corrected the Bible, and prepared it for the press at Moscow, by order of the Tzarevitch Bakar, in 1743.

(16) *Gregorius* (A.D. 1737), Hieromonachos, of the princely race of Vakhvakhof, wrote a narrative of the martyrdom of Queen Ketevan. He also wrote in praise of her hymns, which to this day are sung in the Church.

(17) *Johan* of Tchkhatyr (A.D. 1698), of Guria, a monk, wrote in verse the history and the praises of saints, and a history of Christianity in Kobyleta, or Western Guria.

(18) *Joseph* (A.D. 1779), Catholicos of Imereth, brother of King Solomon I.

(19) *Cosma* (A.D. 1672), Hieromonachos, wrote in praise of Queen Ketevan.

(20) *Job* (A.D. 1691), Archimandrite of Bpita-

reth, learned in the Scriptures and preacher, wrote hymns in praise of martyrs.

(21) *Timotheus* (A.D. 1755), Archbishop of Tiflis, travelled in 1755 to Constantinople, to Mt. Athos, and to Palestine. The only part of his writings known at present is his travels to the holy places.

(22) *Iesse* (A.D. 1640), Archbishop of Tiflis.

(23) *Dositheus* (A.D. 1671), Bishop of Necres, and philosopher.

(24) *Savva* (A.D. 1759), Bishop of Ninotsmindsk, godfather to the last king of Georgia, George the XIIIth.

(25) *Zacharias* Protoiereus (A.D. 1762), of the family of Gabaev.

(26) *Athanasius* (A.D. 1772), archbishop, printed Divine service books at Moscow.

CHAPTER XII.

Return of the Catholicos Antoni I. into Georgia, and his exertions in behalf of the orthodox Church—Archbishop Gaius—The writer Savva Orbelian—Deeds of King Solomon II. in Imereth—Holy men of that time—The Catholicos of Georgia becomes *ex officio* member of the Holy Synod of all the Russias—Last and greatest trials of the Church of Georgia—Sack of Tiflis by the Persians in 1795—King George the XIIIth.



THE Catholicos Antoni I. (A.D. 1762), once returned from Russia to his chair in Georgia, set to work to confirm the orthodox faith, by putting forth and exposing in many writings the faith of the Græco-Eastern Church, and by contributing to the enlightenment of the country. Out of love for science,¹ though without the knowledge of lan-

¹ The writings of the Catholicos Antoni I. and his most remarkable translations are the following :—

guages, but with the assistance of others, he succeeded in translating many excellent books that tended to the real enlightenment of the people.

1. Theology, divided into four parts—Dogmatic, Practical, Mystic, and Polemic.

2. Martyrologue, or narrative in words of praise of nineteen saints of Georgia and of a few from Greece.

3. A Ready Answer, or a refutation of the error of the Latin, Lutheran, and Armenian Churches.

4. Translation of S. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

5. Translation of the fifty-first Psalm.

6. The Spiritual Sling, written by Pitirimus, Bishop of Nijegorod in 1727.

7. A Prologue, or a Synaxarion arranged for every day in the year, written in Iambic verses; the first four months thereof belong to Johannes Petricius, the second to Arsenius, and the third to Antoni.

8. Praises of all the Saints of Georgia, in verse.

9. History of the Œcumenic Council of Ephesus, and the exposition of the rules of that Council.

10. The Rock of Faith of Stephen Yavorski, translated from the Russian.

11. The Dialectic, Topic and Categories of Aristotle, translated from the Armenian.

12. The Philosophy of Baumeister, in four parts, and his Definitivum, with original notes and explanations of the most obscure or of the most remarkable passages.

13. Quintus Curtius' History of Alexander the Great.

14. The Rhetoric of Mekhitar, from the Armenian.

15. A Georgian Grammar, &c.

He also made proof of this same love of knowledge, in his efforts to collect ancient books scattered about in Georgia, so as to save them from the wear and tear of time, for the benefit of posterity. At that time monks and the clergy in general were the instructors of the sons of the Church in true wisdom; and monasteries were the abodes of science and of libraries. There were all the nobility taught; and from thence came forth pastors of the Church and instructors of the people. Then, as heretofore, theology was the chief of all sciences.

II. After Antoni, we may mention Gaius, who was afterwards Archbishop of Astrakhan, as having rendered service to the Church by his writings and by his teaching of youth. Owing to his having been for a short time rector of the Seminary of Telab in Kakheth, he formed many men, who afterwards did service both to the Church and to the country. The fruits of his labours, however, exist only in manuscript.²

² The works of Archbishop Gaius are the following :—

1. Ecclesiastical History, translated from the Russian.
2. Spiritual Regulations of Peter the Great.

At that time appeared the writings of Prince Sul Khan Savva Orbelian, first lexicographer of Georgia, who wrote in the year 1761. His works, in which he endeavoured to show the heterodoxy of the Græco-Eastern Church, are known under the name of "The Gate of Paradise." After taking the order of monk in Georgia, he departed from the orthodox faith, by receiving at Rome the Roman Catholic confession of faith, at the instigation and under the protection of Pope Clement XI. Antoni I.

3. The Divinity of his Eminence Plato, Metropolitan of Moscow.
4. Moral Treatises of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius.
5. Royal Instruction of the Deacon Agapitus of Constantinople—how to reign—written to the Emperor Justinian.
6. Dictionary of all the remarkable cities of Europe.
7. Moral Treatise of Kitais.
8. Ancient History by Rollin.
9. Translation of the Proverbs of Solomon.
10. Letters of Basile the Great.
11. A Georgian Grammar, printed in the town of Krementsuga, in the government of Poltava.
12. Stories out of the History of Georgia.
13. Touching the Faith, in Questions and Answers.
14. Speeches delivered in the Seminary of Telav, of which he was Rector under King Heraclius II.
15. Sermons for certain days, &c.

opposed himself so strongly to this perversion, that, despite the extensive knowledge, acquirements, and reputation of Orbelian, neither his writings nor his example had any dangerous influence over the orthodox Christians of Georgia.

III. Then was the Church of Imereth and of Mingrelia governed by an independent Catholicos. After the peace with the Turks made by the Russians in 1774, that Church could not be safe from the wistful looks of the Pashas of Anatolia, who saw hidden under her, a great and powerful support of the Russian throne. Moreover, King Solomon II. (A.D. 1793—1811), brought up in Tiflis, having ascended the throne of Imereth, turned his attention to the morals of his subjects; and, for the close union of his kingdom with that of Mingrelia, he contracted an alliance by marriage with one of its most powerful princes, by taking to himself to wife the Princess Maria Katsievna;³ he brought a printing-office into Kitais, where was printed a remarkable number of books for the service of the Church;⁴ he opened schools; and, being

³ He died at S. Petersburg on the 19th March, 1841.

⁴ At that time were printed the following books:—The

in the straitest bond of union with all the provinces of Imereth, he gave peaceful days to the Church.

Imereth, Mingrelia, and Georgia had a sufficient number of learned men for their spiritual enlightenment; among them the Archbishop Antoni of Tchkondiv descended from the great princes of Dadian,⁵ confirmed by his words the orthodox faith throughout Imereth. Nevertheless, neither could the safe establishment of the kingdom nor the prosperity of the Church be settled and completed without the help of the Russian people.

IV. The great number of monasteries and of hermitages in Imereth contributed to the peaceful results of true Christianity, and served as pillars on which the Church rested, while persecuted on all sides by the Turks. During this time of persecution and of anguish to all, the Church of Imereth saw and honoured many defenders of the Faith who occupied

Gospels, the Acts and Epistles, the Breviary, the Psalter and the Service-Book.

⁵ Of his writings there remain :—Sundry Discourses for Solemn Feast-Days, Records of the Events of his Time, and a List of the Diocesan Archpriests (*ἀρχιερείς*) of Imereth, of Guria, and of Mingrelia.

the Episcopal Chair, in her rugged mountains and in many of her desert places. Among them shine most brightly *John*, Bishop of Manglia, a worker of miracles, celebrated, even in Russia, for his sainted life, and now honoured by God himself through all his miracles in Tiflis, where his bones rest in the Synod Cathedral of Sion ; *Nicolai*, Catholicos of Imereth ; *Zenon*, Bishop of Necres ; *Theodorus*, Archbishop of Mtskhetha ; *Germanus*, Metropolitan of Tiflis ; *Gennadius*, Anchorite in the desert of John the Baptist ; *Zenon*, Archbishop of Alaberd ; *Victor*, Bishop of Khartshashni ; *Serapion*, champion of the desert of Davido-Garedj. Many others, glorious for their struggles for the Faith, for their solitary life, and for their martyrdom, whether from the omission of historians, or from their own silence, are known of Heaven alone.

V. Georgia, having received the protection of Russia, in 1783, during the reign of the Georgian king, Heraclius II., underwent little alteration in her ecclesiastical hierarchy. This alteration consisted only in the Catholicos, who, by the arrangement of the Holy Synod of all the Russias, could no longer exercise his former independent office. It stands

to reason that such a change brought no real alteration in the faith ; but the Georgian Church, by being in union with that of Russia, found for herself both a stay and unity of thought, as well in doctrine as in rites and ceremonies. By this change the Catholicos Antoni II., son of King Heraclius, was honoured with a seat in the Holy Synod, without, for all that, losing the title of Catholicos of Mtskhetha and of all Georgia—a title which continued attached to that dignity and in Georgia until the year 1811.

VI. The last and most heavy trial of the Church of Iberia was the irruption of Mahomed-Khan into the weakened state of Georgia, in the year 1795. In the month of September of that year the Persian army took the city of Tiflis, seized almost all the valuable property of the royal house, and reduced the palace and the whole of the city into a heap of ashes and of ruins. The whole of Georgia, thus left at the mercy of the ruthless enemies of the name of Christ, witnessed the profanation of everything holy; and the most abominable deeds and practices carried on in the temples of God. Neither youth nor old age could bring those cruel persecutors to pity ;

the churches were filled with troops of murderers and children were killed at their mothers' breasts. They took the Archbishop of Tiflis, Dositheus, who had not come out of the Synod of Sion, made him kneel down before an image of the B. V. Mary, and, without mercy on his old age, threw him from a balcony into the river Kur; then they plundered his house, and set fire to it. The pastors of the Church, unable to hide the treasures and other valuable property of the Church, fell a sacrifice to the ferocity of their foes. Many images of saints renowned in those days perished for ever; as, for instance, among others, the image of the B. Virgin of the Church of Metekh, and that of the Synod of Sion. The enemy, having rifled churches, destroyed images, and profaned the tombs of saints, revelled in the blood of Christians; and the inhuman Mahomed-Khan put an end to these horrors only when there remained not a living soul in Tiflis.

VII. King George XIII., who ascended the throne of Georgia (A.D. 1797—1800) only to see his subjects overwhelmed and rendered powerless by their incessant and hopeless struggles with unavoidable


dangers from enemies of the faith and of the people, found the resources of the kingdom exhausted by the constant armaments necessary for its own protection; before his eyes lay the ruins of the city, villages plundered and laid waste, churches, monasteries, and hermitages demolished, troubles within the family, and without it the sword, fire, and inevitable ruin, not only of the Church, but also of the people, yea, even of the very name of the people. In the fear of God, and trusting to His providence, he made over orthodox Georgia in a decided manner to the Tzar of Russia, his co-religionist; and thus obtained for her peace and quiet. It pleased God, through this king, to heal the deep wounds of an orthodox kingdom.

Feeling that his end was drawing near, he, with the consent of all ranks and of the people, requested the Emperor Paul I. to take Georgia into his subjection for ever (A.D. 1800). The Emperor Alexander I. when he mounted the throne, promised to protect the Georgian people of the same faith with himself which had thus given itself over unreservedly and frankly to the protection of Russia. In his manifesto to the people of Georgia (A.D. 1801) he pro-

claimed the following:—"One and the same dignity, one and the same honour, and humanity lay upon us the sacred duty, after hearing the prayers of sufferers, to grant them justice and equity in exchange for their affliction, security for their persons and for their property, and to give to all alike the protection of the law."

Thus were the last wishes of the king fulfilled—to abide with heart and soul by a Tzar of the same Faith, who on that occasion distinguished himself by a more than human wisdom. Posterity will value the boon granted by that sovereign.

ON THE HIERARCHY OF THE GEORGIAN CHURCH.

EITHER the Georgian annals, which for a long time past have been followed by writers, nor the records found at the present day in monasteries, give in full the course of the Georgian hierarchy, nor the introduction of Christianity into Georgia, either at first or in after-time. Neither do Greek authors make mention of Eustathius of Antioch, as we already remarked in Chap. I. It is in the history of the country, and in charters of the Georgian monastery on Mt. Athos in Greece, that we find first mention made by name of S. Nina, the illuminatress of Georgia, and of the Archbishop Eus-

tathius of Antioch, patriarch, sent by the Emperor Constantine at the request of King Mirian. But as temples and Christians increased in number, so also did an increase of bishops and of priests follow as a matter of course. From history, too, it is evident that for this purpose Greeks were for a long time appointed bishops, as we see clearly from their succession after Eustathius of Antioch. Their rights and rule extended, according to the spirit of those times, not only over the churches, but also over civil matters. This was done, however, not so much in order that the archbishops should strive ardently for worldly distinction in an ambitious spirit, as that the kings themselves, little instructed in the faith, wished that the bishops and the archbishops should share in the civil government for the good of the people, thoroughly devoted to Christianity. Then, undoubtedly, it may be owing to the respect paid to the Patriarch Eustathius, to whom belongs the glory of establishing that Church, and of consecrating her archbishop, that the Georgian Church from the first was dependent on the Patriarch of Constantinople, and, therefore, soon united to the chair of Antioch.

Whether or not she from the first appointed independent archbishops, or *αὐτοκεφάλους*, of whom there were many at the beginning of the fifth century, does not appear from history; only Balsamon, in his history of Constantinople,¹ mentions Iberia as an *αὐτοκέφαλος*, independent Church.

Meanwhile we find from the history of Georgia that, during the reign of Wakhtang Gorhaslan, and by his will, the Archbishop of Iberia took the name of Catholicos; and with that title were henceforth also given to the Archbishop of Iberia all the rights of independence (*αὐτοκέφαλον*).² Procopius writes³

¹ Nilus Doxapatrius in notitia suæ Græcæ Iberiam prisca ætate Amasææ Helenoponti metropoli obnoxiam fuisse ponit. Oriens Christ. tom. i. p. 1335.

² Rule vi. cap. 2 :—"Si alias etiam ecclesias inveneris, quæ principales et per se sint capita, ut Bulgariam, Cyprum, Iberiam, ne mireris." The patriarchs of the Eastern orthodox Church always made use of the following titles in their missives to the Archbishop of Iberia : "Most happy (or glorious) primitive (*αὐτοκέφαλος*) Archbishop of the whole land of Iberia;" "In the Holy Ghost beloved brother of (our humility) us his servants;" and at the end : "Health from the Lord, Most Reverend Father (or Master), beloved Brother, and Fellow-servant."—Descript. of the four Œcum. Patriarchates, S. Petersb., 1784, p. 15.

³ De. Bell. Pers. lib. ii. cap. 25.

that in his time, both in Georgia and in Perso-Armenia, the heads of the clergy were called Catholicos. On the other hand, such a separation of the Georgian Church from the Greek Patriarchates was, it appears, the result of the difficulty of relations with Antioch, and not without the consent of the Patriarch of Antioch. The Church of Iberia, on a par with the Church of Cyprus, and with that of Bulgaria, as to rights, although dependent on her own Catholicos as regards her inward rule and government, in her outward construction never swerved from the orthodox faith and from union with the Eastern Greek Church, except in one ceremony of the Armenian Church—not to mix luke-warm water with the consecrated elements, as is commonly done in the Georgian Church; but this was altered by the decrees of the second Council of Constantinople.⁴ Likewise the custom of

⁴ Ac Iberi quidem aquam in sanctum calicem non injiciunt, licet sint alioqui in primis orthodoxi, et Synodice aliquando interrogati quomodo hoc faciunt, dixerunt, nunquam ullum Iberum aqua calida usum esse ad vini potionem, ex longa regionis consuetudine: et propterea eos ne ferventi quidam aqua uti ad sacramenta. Mysterii autem facultatem edocti,

giving Georgian daughters in marriage to Mahomedans, the result of the times, and not of endurance of Mahomedanism, or of the fear and helplessness of the Georgians under the yoke of their Mahomedan rulers, also drew the attention of the Greek Church, and a well-merited rebuke from her.⁵

citra ullam recusationem persuasi sunt ferventem in sanctæ participationis tempore injicere.—Canon SS. Apost. Theodor. Balsam., p. 306.—This rite may have been first introduced at the time of Cyrus (A.D. 630), Bishop of the Eparchy of Phazida, who received from the Emperor Heraclius the chair of Patriarch of Alexandria, taught the heresy of the Monothelytes, was opposed in his teaching by Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and condemned by the Sixth Œcumenic Council.

⁵ *Ego autem qui scio esse orthodoxos Iberos, et nostra omnia suscepisse et videam ipsos filios Agarenis nuptum dare, miror et nescio, quomodo a suis sacerdotibus, qui legunt et sciunt decreta canonum hæc noc prohibentur. Hæc ego corrigi cupio potentissimi et sanctissimi nostri Imperatoris auxilio.*—*Constitutio xviii. tituli quinti lib. i.* Balsam. ed. 1630, Paris, p. 179.—*Nota ergo præsentem canonem propter Iberos, qui suas filias Agarenis indiscriminatim in matrimonio collocant.*—*Ibid. p. 449.*

King Wakhtang VI., legislator of Georgia, resting on this ancient institution of the Church, and on the thirty-first Canon of the Council of Laodicea, that forbids marriages of orthodox persons with heretics or with infidels, gave rules for similar occasions. These rules are found in his code, divis. of

Georgian Christians shared their meat and drink with heretics, with Mahomedans, and even with heathens; but they showed how truly impossible it is to hold close intercourse with even neighbours who are heretics—as, for instance, with the Armenians, of whom many were subjects of Georgia; with Mahomedans⁶—as, for instance, with the Persians and with the Turks, at times lords over them, at others their subjects; with heathens—as, for instance, with the mountain tribes subject to them; and with such others whose friendship, by reason of their number, was an advantage to the Church of Georgia.

We find, then, from history that not only did the

Greek laws, § 73 or 74. And in § 75 we read, respecting matrimonial alliances with Jews and with Mahomedans: “Christians must not give their daughters to Jews and to Tartars, neither let their sons marry the daughters of them. Whoever does so exposes himself to a righteous punishment, and receives his portion with the Devil and with the Jew.”

⁶ VII. Can. of the Council of Ancyra, Balsam.—*Nota hæc . . . adversus eos, qui una cum Saracenis comedunt vel cum aliis gentilibus; Iberes autem nihil referre dicunt an cum orthodoxis, an cum hæreticis comedatur; et quomodo hoc fiat nescio.*—*Synodicon, sive Pandectæ canonum SS. Apostol. tom. ii. p. 116. (Oxonii, 1672.)*

Georgian Church not come out from the Greek Church, but that she quarrelled with the churches which severed themselves from her. Moreover, in the troublous times of the Greek Church caused by the Iconoclasts, the Georgians piously adhered to the primitive teaching of the Church, as to the respect paid to images; and the Catholicos of Georgia consecrated in Mtskhetha John, bishop of the Goths.⁷ The final and common judgment of the Church, centered in the person of the Catholicos, could not otherwise have been complete and decisive without the consent to it of the Greek Patriarch in Constantinople, as it is evident from the example in the person of the Catholicos Michael, who was sent for judgment to Constantinople. Kings, albeit they sallied forth

⁷ In vita S. Johannis Gothiæ Episcopi, qui sæculo ecclesiæ octavo claruit ipse legitur non Constantinopolim, de prisco more sed in Iberiam potius ad gentis hujus Catholicum perrexisse, a quo consecraretur, quia per omne Byzantinum Imperium Iconomachorum hæresis grassabatur, a qua proinde Iberia immunis sarta tectaque manserat.—Oriens Christ. tom. i. p. 1333.—We find the same thing stated in the Synaxarion for the 1st of October, noticed in the Georgian Ritual and elsewhere.

to do the work of the Church by arming themselves with power and with strength against heretics, and against books injurious to the Church, yet did this only for the confirmation of the Faith, and of ecclesiastical regulations, as we see from the examples of Queen Tamar, and of King David the Reformer.

Colchis, the present Mingrelia, was dependent on the head of the Church of Iberia ever since the days of the Greek Emperor Justinian. In those days the Greeks, for the furtherance of their commerce along the Black Sea with Asia through Karthalinia, and for the support of Christianity in the towns built by them, established here and there a few clergy and bishops, who were everywhere dependent on Greek hierarchs, as also the Colchians, who were then under the rule of Greek emperors. All those churches were reckoned to the Eparchy of Asia Minor.⁸ Stratophile, one of the bishops of the town of Pitiunta, was present at the first Œcumenic council of Nicæa. And at the sixth Œcumenic

⁸ Josephi Binghami *Angli origines seu antiq. Eccles. Lib.* 18, c. iii. § 18.

council of Constantinople⁹ were present the Bishops Theodorus and John, of the towns of Colchis, Petia, and Phazida. On the other hand, since the kings of Iberia never yielded to the Greeks the ancient dignity of their kingdom and of their subjects, then were both Colchis and Trapezus itself reckoned at times to the Catholicos of Iberia, and at others they found themselves independent of them, considering themselves as it were an independent church (*αὐτοκέφαλος*). Thus the town of Sebastopolis was of the Autokephalia of Ap'hkhazia,¹⁰ Phazida a province of the Lazes,¹¹ and Trapezus of the province of Pontus. From the records of the Emperor Leo, it is evident that the Bishop of Colchis was dependent on the Metropolitan of Trapezus.¹² But the Georgian Kodin mentions Ap'hkhazia and Sebastopolis as Autokephalia

⁹ Binii Sever. Concilia Gener. et Provinc. tom. i. p. 342. Among the names of the Bishops who signed the Acts of the Synods, we find Favst (Faustinus), Bishop of the Gygani.

¹⁰ See Catal. Provinc. et Metrol. in noticia edita per Bevergium et Goar.

¹¹ Leunclavium et Bevergium.

¹² Johannis Leunclavii Pandect. Hist. Turcic.

of the Patriarchate of Antioch.¹³ On the other hand, he places the towns of Phazidis and Rhodopolis, and others, in the Eparchy of the Lazes.¹⁴

All the rest of Kakheth, of Somkheth, where is now the town of Manglis, and the churches of the Caucasus, were straitly united to the Church of Karthalinia under one head, the Archbishop or Catholicos of Mtzkhetha.

Historians give us the names of the Catholicos of Georgia in the following order:—

ARCHBISHOPS.

	A.D.		A.D.
1. John I.	318	6. John II.	
2. James .	364	7. George .	
3. Job .	379	8. Basile .	
4. Elias .	405	9. Mobidag .	434
5. Simeon .	408	10. Michael .	446

CATHOLICOS.

	A.D.		A.D.
11. Peter .	457	41. Michael II. .	1396
12. Samuel I.	499	42. David I. .	1407
13. Tavbetchag .	541	43. Eliaz II. .	
14. Tchigirman .	542	44. Theodore .	

¹³ Codin. in notit. Græc. Episcop.

¹⁴ Ibid.

	A.D.		A.D.
15. Savva . . .	555	45. Shio . . .	1430
16. Eulabius . . .	560	46. David II. . .	1462
17. Macarius . . .	572	47. Nicolai IV. . .	
18. Simeon I. . .	581	48. Abraham II. . .	1494
19. Samuel II. . .	589	49. Basile II. . .	
20. Simeon II. . .	600	50. Dorotheus II. . .	1522
21. Bartholomew . . .	603	51. Melchizedek . . .	1525
22. John I. . .	620	52. Germanus . . .	1532
23. Vavil . . .	629	53. Nicolai V. . .	1548
24. Thabor . . .	663	54. Domentius I. . .	1559
25. John II. . .	717	55. Malachi . . .	1580
26. John III. . .	1089	56. Zacharias . . .	1603
27. Nicolai I. . .	1150	57. Eudemon I. . .	1634
28. Michael I. . .	1160	58. Christophore . . .	1642
29. Theodosius . . .	1169	59. Domentius II. . .	1660
30. John IV. . .	1171	60. Nicolai VI. . .	1675
31. Theodosius . . .	1202	61. John V. . .	1688
32. Nicolai II. . .	1209	62. Eudemon II. . .	1704
33. Euthymius I. . .	1216	63. Domentius II. . .	1705
34. Nicolai III. . .	1240	64. Vissarion . . .	1724
35. Abraham I. . .	1270	65. Nicolai VII. . .	1741
36. Euthymius II. . .	1301	66. Antoni I. . .	1744
37. Basile I. . .	1345	67. Joseph . . .	1756
38. Dorotheus I. . .	1357	68. Again, Antonius I. . .	1765
39. George . . .	1375	69. Antoni II. ¹⁵ . . .	1788
40. Elioz I. . .	1391		

¹⁵ It is clear from sundry books on ecclesiastical matters that there were several Catholicos non-mentioned in history, such were *Clement*, who lived in the ixth century; *Malachia*, (*Malacenum*), cotemporary of Pope Benedict IV. (A.D. 900—

When the division of Georgia into two kingdoms took place, there appeared two Catholicos, one of which was named Catholicos of Karthalinia, of Kakheth, and of Tiflis, and lived in the capital of Mtskhetha, and the other lived in Bitchvinta (Pytius), but afterwards in the town of Imereth Kitais, with the title of Catholicos of Ap'hkhazia and of Imereth.

Of the Catholicos of Ap'hkhazia and of Imereth are known the following :—

	A.D.		A.D.
1. Arsenius (about)	. 1390	10. Simeon, died in	. 1666
2. John	. 1472	11. Eudemon II.	. .
3. Malachi	. 1533	12. David	. 1680
4. Eudemon I.	. 1582	13. Gregory II.	. 1731
5. Euthymius	. .	14. Germanus	. 1742
6. Malachi II.	. 1628	15. Nicolai	. .
7. Maximus I.	. .	16. Joseph	. 1779
8. Gregory I.	. 1631	17. Maximus II.	. .
9. Zacharias	. 1658		

903) ; *Kyrion*, known by his disputes with the Armenians, who lived in the vth century (see note 53) ; *Elias*, who lived in the xith century, between 1089 and 1150, and restored a monastery in Tiflis, as we find from inscriptions on stones ; *Arsenius* in the xith century ; *Cyril*, Archbishop of Mtskhetha (in Samtavra), occupant of the chair of Catholicos at the end of the xviith century. The years of accession of every

After the death of the last Catholicos of Imereth, Maximus II., who died in the convent of Retchersk in Kief, in the year 1796 (30th of May), the two churches joined by outward bonds of union, yet at times separated from each other by different confessions of faith, were governed by the one Catholicos of Georgia.

The badge which in ancient times distinguished a Catholicos from other bishops was:—(1) Two seraphims made of strung pearls and other precious stones, and sewn on the skirts of the black cape; (2) a cross in front thereof; (3) a black velvet cloak with silver streamlets; (4) a mitre with a cross on the top, and edged all round with a fretted crown; (5) and, while officiating, two panaghias with a cross. Above these, the Emperor Paul I., of blessed memory, bestowed on Antoni II. a white cape with seraphims.

When the last Catholicos Antoni¹⁶ was discharged

Catholicos to the Church government, necessary for a critical history of the same, are stated in a MS. found in my collection of Georgian MSS. No. 167.

¹⁶ The Catholicos Antoni II. died at Nijni Novgorod, on the 21st of November 1828, aged sixty-eight.

from the government of spiritual matters in Georgia, on the 10th of July, 1711, the office of Catholicos ceased altogether. Instead of it, the head of the Georgian clergy was allowed, by the supreme will of the Emperor, to take the name of Metropolitan of Mtskhetha and of Kartalinia, and for ever to appropriate to himself the title of "Member of the Synod, and Exarch of Georgia." And to that dignity was the Georgian Archbishop Balaam then raised by the Emperor's good pleasure. The Emperor attached to him a court for the regulation of matters referring to the Georgian Church only; for the Church of Imereth was then under the government of archpriests of those parts. On the 30th of August, 1814, the exarchate of Imereth was given by the Emperor, to the Georgian exarch Balaam, and instead of the court then sitting in Tiflis, a board of management of the holy synod of Georgia and of Imereth, under the immediate supervision of the synod, was organized, and presided over by the exarch. In December 1818, and at the representation of the synod, which the Emperor confirmed, one exarchy alone was established in Georgia with the title of Eparchy of Kartalinia and

of Kakheth; whence the Exarch of Georgia is at present called Exarch of Karthalinia and of Kakheth.

Together with the establishment of the exarchate in Georgia, or from 1811, the Exarchs have been :

1. The Metropolitan *Balaam*, of the princely race of Georgian Eristhavs, who died in 1830 at Moscow.
2. The Metropolitan *Theophilact*, who died at Georgia, July 19, 1821.
3. The Metropolitan *Jonas*, who is now (1842) at St. Petersburg, attending the Holy Synod of Government.
4. The Archbishop *Moses*, who died in Tiflis, July 13, 1834.
5. The Archbishop *Eugenius*, who now (1842) governs the Exarchate of Georgia.

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